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OUR
SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY,
&c. &c.

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OUR

THROUGH

BY

JOSEPH & ELIZABETH ROBINS
PENNELL.

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
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1888.

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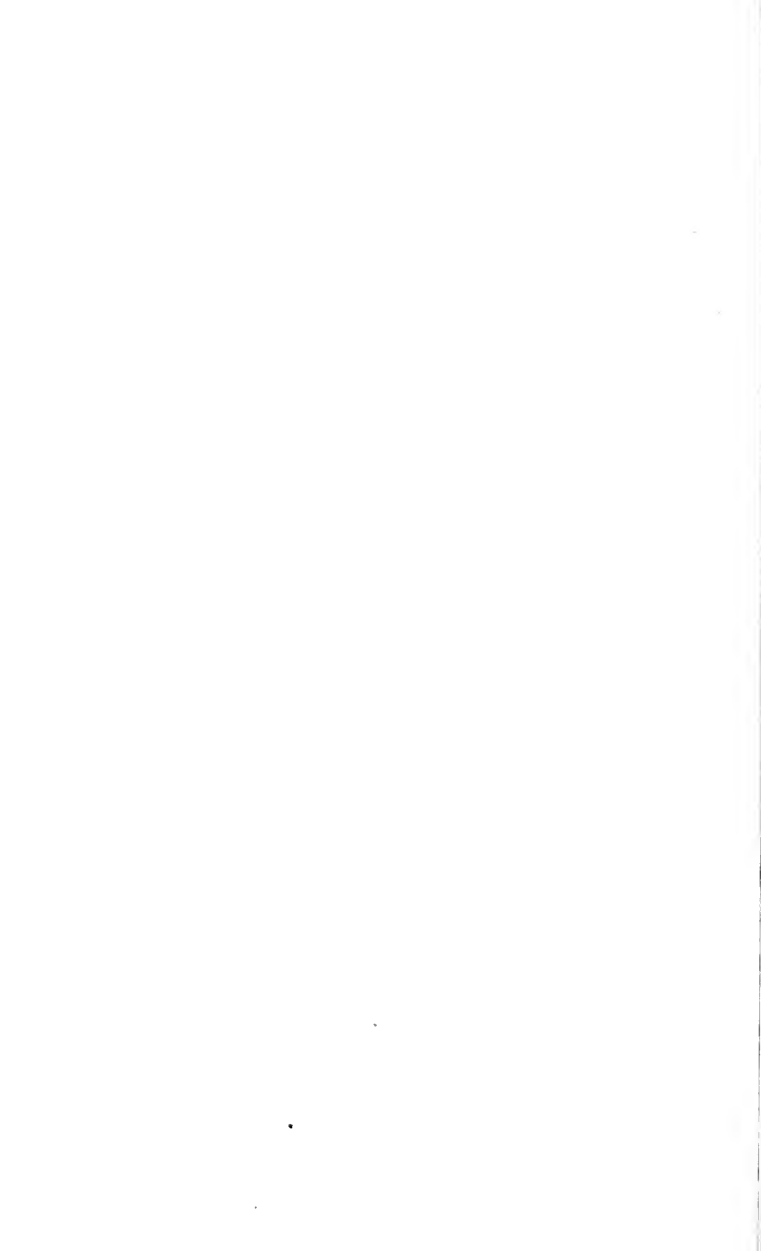
NOTE TO THE CRITIC AND THE READER.

OUR great ambition when we first set out on our tricycle, three years ago, was to ride from London to Rome. We did not then know exactly why we wanted to do this, nor do we now. The third part of the journey was “ridden, written, and wrought into a work” before the second part was begun; and, moreover, when and where we could not ride with ease—across the Channel and over the Alps, for example—we went by boat and train. In our simplicity we thought by publishing the story of our journey,
we

we could show the world at large, and perhaps Mr. Ruskin in particular, that the oft-regretted delights of travelling in days of coach and post-chaise, destroyed on the coming of the railroad, were once more to be had by means of tricycle or bicycle. We can only hope that critic and reader are not, like Mr. Ruskin, prepared to spend all their best "bad language" "in reprobation of bi-tri-and-4-5-6 or 7-cycles," and that the riding we found so beautiful will not to them, as to him, be but a vain wriggling on wheels. We also thought we might prove to the average cyclist how much better it is to spend spare time and money in making Pilgrims' Progresses and Sentimental Journeys than in hanging around race-tracks. However that may be, we have at length accomplished the

the

the object of our riding, and that is the great matter after all. As to future rides and records, if we make any, it is our intention to for ever keep them to ourselves, and so—spare the public.



Dedication.

TO

LAURENCE STERNE, Esq.,
&c. &c. &c.

LONDON, *Jan. 2^d*, 1888.

DEAR SIR,—

We never should have ventured to address you, had we not noticed of late that Mr. Andrew Lang has been writing to Dead Authors, not one of whom—to our knowledge—has taken offence at this liberty. Encouraged by his example, we beg leave to dedicate to you this history of our journey, laying it with the most respectful humility before your sentimental shade, and
regretting

regretting it is without that charm of style which alone could make it worthy.

And as, in our modesty, we would indeed be unwilling to trouble you a second time, we must take advantage of this unhopd-for opportunity to add a few words of explanation about our journey in your honour. It is because of the conscientious fidelity with which we rode over the route made ever famous by you, that we have included ourselves in the class of Sentimental Travellers, of which you must ever be the incomparable head. To other sentiment, dear Sir, whatever we may have thought in the enthusiasm of setting out, we now know we can lay no claim. Experience has taught us that it depends upon the man himself, and not upon his circumstances or surroundings. Nowadays the manner of travelling through France
and

and Italy is by rail, and mostly on Cook's tickets, and chaises have become a luxury which we at least cannot afford. The only vehicle by which we could follow your wheel-tracks along the old post roads was our tricycle, an ingenious machine of modern invention, endeared to us, because without it *Our Sentimental Journey* would have been an impossibility. In these degenerate days, you, Sir, we are sure, would prefer it to a railway carriage, as little suited to your purposes as to those of Mr. Ruskin—an author whose rare and racy sayings you would no doubt admire were you still interested in earthly literature. Besides, in a tandem, with its two seats, there would be nothing to stir up a disagreeable sensation within you. You would still have a place for “the lady.”

Because it was not possible to follow you in many ways, we have spared no effort

effort to be faithful in others. We left out not one city which you visited, and it was a pleasure to learn that the world is still as beautiful as you found it, though to-day most men of culture care so little for what is about them, they would have us believe all beauty belongs to the past. However, it will be gratifying to you, who did not despise fame during your lifetime, to know that you are one of the men of that past who have not wholly died.—And again, dear Sir, as it was your invariable custom to borrow the thoughts and words of any writer who particularly pleased you—a custom your enemies have made the most of—we have not hesitated to use any pictures of other men, or any descriptions and expressions in your works, that seemed appropriate to the record of our journey. More honest than you, Sir, we have given credit to the artists, that their
names

names may enhance the value of our modest offering. But as you will recognise your own words without our pointing them out, we have not even put them into quotation marks, an omission which you of all men can best appreciate.

In conclusion: we think you may be pleased to hear something of your last earthly resting-place in the burying-ground belonging to St. George's, Hanover Square. We made a pilgrimage to it but a few Sundays ago. Though your grave was neglected until the exact spot is no longer known, the stone, since raised *near the place*, is so often visited that, though it stands far from the path, a way to it has been worn in the grass by the feet of the many, who have come to breathe a sigh or drop a tear for poor Yorick. We scarcely know if it will be any comfort to you in your present life, to learn that this cemetery is a quiet, rest-
ful

ful enclosure, near as it is to the carriages and 'busses about Marble Arch and the Socialist and Salvationist gatherings in Hyde Park. In the spring it is pretty as well, laburnums shading the doorway of the little chapel, through which one can see from the street the grey grave-stones that dot the grass, and seem no less peaceful than the sheep in the broad fields of the park opposite.

We have the honour to be, dear Sir,
your most obedient and most devoted
and most humble servants,

JOSEPH PENNELL.

ELIZABETH ROBINS PENNELL.

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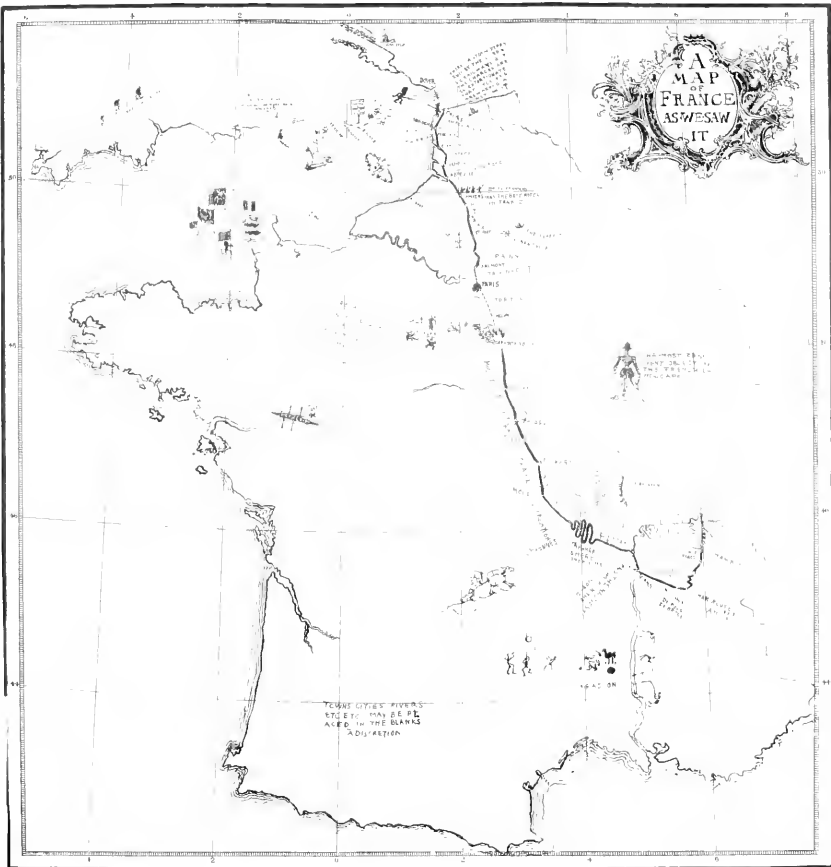
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50

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OUR
SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY,

&c. &c.

—“**T**HE roads,” said I, “are better
in France.”

“You have ridden in France?” said
J——, turning quick upon me with the
most civil sarcasm in the world.

“Strange!” quoth I, arguing the
matter with him, “you have so little
faith in cyclers that you cannot take
their word for it.”

A

“’Tis

“ ‘Tis but a three hours’ journey to Calais and French roads,” said J——; “why not ride over them ourselves?”



—So, giving up the argument, not many days later we put up our flannels and our ulsters, our “Sterne” and our “Baedeker,” a box of etching plates, and a couple of note-books—“Our old cycling suits,” said I, darning a few rents, “will do” —took our seats in a third-class railway

railway carriage at Holborn Viaduct ;



and the *Calais-Douvres* sailing at half-past twelve that same morning, by two we were so incontestably in France, that a crowd of shouting, laughing, jesting, noisy Frenchmen in blue blouses were struggling up the gang-plank with the tricycle, which at Dover half the number
of



of stolid Englishmen in green velveten had delivered into the hands of the sailors.---But before we had set foot in the French dominions we had been treated by the French with an inhospitality which, had it not been for the sentiment of our proposed ride, would have made us forget the excellence of the roads beckoning us to its coast, and have sent us back in hot haste to England.——

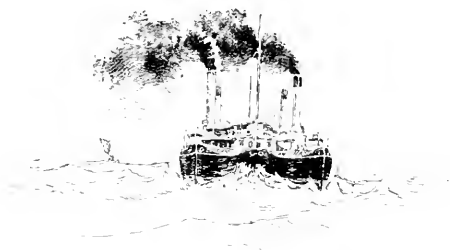
“To pay a shilling tax for the privilege of landing in France,” cried J——, fresh from his “Sterne,” “by heavens, gentlemen, it is not well done! And much does it grieve me ’tis the law—givers and taxmakers of a sister Republic whose people are renowned for courtesy and politeness, that I have thus to reason with.”

—But I confess we were much worse treated

treated by the English, who seemed as unwilling to lose our tricycle as the French were to receive us.——

“ Eight shillings to carry it from London to Dover ; ’tis no small price,” said J——, putting the change in his purse. “ But fifteen from Dover to Calais, as much as we pay for our two tickets, tax and all, I tell you ’tis monstrous ! To seize upon an unwary cyclist going forth in search of good roads, and make him pay thus dearly for sport taken away from England——ungenerous ! ”

—But we had scarce begun our sentimental journey.



CALAIS.

CALAIS.

NOW, before I quit Calais, a travel-writer would say, it would not be amiss to give some account of it.---But while we were there we were more concerned in seeking the time and occasion for sentiment than in studying the history and monuments of the town. If you would have a short description of it, I know of none better than that of Mr. Tristram Shandy, who wrote without even having seen by daylight the places he described.---The church with the steeple, the great Square, the town-house, the Courgain, are all there still, and I fancy have changed but little in a hundred years.

To



To travellers eager for sentiment, nothing could have been more vexatious than the delay at the Custom-House, where the tandem was weighed, its wheels measured, and its number taken; and we were made to deposit fifty francs, three-fourths of which sum would be returned if we carried the machine out of France within three months, the remaining fourth going to pay the Government for our wear and tear of French roads. ---There was another delay at the Hôtel Meurice while a room was found for us, and a *femme-de-chambre* insisted upon *Madame's* going to bed at once, because of the terrible wind that had prostrated two English ladies. But, finally rid of officials and *femmes-de-chambre*, we walked out on the street.

Now was the moment for an occasion for sentiment to present itself.

It

It is a rude world, I think, when the wearer of a cycling suit (even if it be old and worn) cannot go forth to see the town but instantly he is stared at and ridiculed by the townspeople. For our



part, being but modest folk, we keenly felt the glances and smiles of the well-dressed men and women on the Rue Royale. To find a quiet place we walked from one end of the town to the other; through the Square where Mr. Shandy would have put up his fountain,
and

and where a man at an upper window yelled in derision, and a woman in a doorway below answered——

“What wouldst thou have? ’Tis the English fashion.”

—Down a narrow street, where, “For example!” cried a little young lady in blue, laughing in J——’s very face—for we had turned full in front on a group of girls—while a child clapped her hands at sight of him, and a black dog snapped at his stockings. And then up a second street, that led to the barracks, where two soldiers on duty put down their guns and fairly shrieked. Into the Cathedral children followed us, begging, “Won sous, sare! won sous, sare!” until we longed to conceal our nationality. At its door a poor wretch of a fisherman, who had looked upon the wine when it was red, came to our side to tell us in very bad English that he
could

could speak French.---There was no peace to be had in the town.



If there was one thing we hoped for more than another, it was to see a monk, the first object of our master's sentiment in France ; and, strange as it may seem, our hope was actually fulfilled before the afternoon was over.---On the outskirts of the city, where we had taken refuge from

from ridicule, we saw a brown hooded and cloaked Franciscan, and in our joy started to overtake him. But he walked quite as fast across the yellow-flowered sand-dunes towards



After L. D.

St. Pierre. Had he known what was in our hearts, I think he too would have introduced himself with a little story of the wants of his convent and the poverty of his order.

We soon discovered that it was a *fête* day in Calais, and that a regatta was being held down by the pier.---When we were there three Frenchmen in jockey-caps were pulling long out-riggers against the wind over a chopping sea. Looking on was a great crowd, sad-coloured in the grey afternoon light, for all its holiday dress, but touched here and there with

with white by the caps — their wide fluted borders blowing back in the breeze — of the peasant women.



As every one who has passed in the Paris train knows, at the entrance of the town is the town-gate, a heavy grey pile, with high-gabled roof and drawbridge, the chains



of which hang on either side the archway.

Now

Now that Dessein's was gone, J—— declared that it interested him more than anything else in Calais, since Hogarth had painted it; and he began an elaborate study. It was not easy work. To the people in their holiday humour the combination of knee-breeches and sketch-book was irresistibly comic.

But he went bravely on.

I have rarely seen him more conscientious over a sketch.

Indeed he was so pleased with this gate that later, when, at the end of a street, we came to another, under a tall turreted house, and leading into a large courtyard, nothing would do but he must have that



as well.---In a word, he was in a mood

to

to draw as many gates as he could find; but by this time at the Hôtel Meurice dinner was on the table.

It was not until many weeks after, when we were back in London, that, on looking into the matter, J—— discovered that Hogarth painted, not the gate facing the sea, but that at the other end of the town—I verily believe the only gate in all Calais of which he did not get a sketch.

On the whole the afternoon was a disappointment. In little more than a single hour our Master had grasped seventeen chapters of adventures. In thrice that time we, with hearts interested in everything, and eyes to see, had met with a paltry few, easily disposed of in as many lines.---To add vexation to vexation, at the *table d'hôte* we learned from the waiter, that though the old inn had long since ceased to exist, there was

a new Dessen's in the town, where, for the name's sake, it would have been more appropriate to begin our journey. Had we carried a "Baedeker" for Northern as well as Central France, we should have been less ignorant.

We left the champions of the regatta toasting each other at the next table, and went into the *salon* to study a chapter of our sentimental guide-book in preparation for the first day's ride. But an American was there before us, and began, instead, a talk about Wall Street and business, Blaine and torch-light processions. As Americans do not travel to see Americans, we retired to our room.





BY A FAIR RIVER AND OVER
TERRIBLE MOUNTAINS.



THE milkman,
followed by
his goats, was piping
through the town,
and the clock over
the geraniums in the
court was just strik-
ing eight, as we dis-
posed of our bill—not
without numerous
complaints, in which every one but some
English

English tourists joined — and wheeled the tricycle out to the street.---Though the old motherly *femme-de-chambre* had come to see us ride, and stopped a friend to share this pleasure, and though there were many faces at the dining-room windows, the sight of the *pavé*, or French paving, kept us from mounting. We walked, J—— pushing the tricycle, to the *Place*, past the grey town-hall, into the Rue Royale. We had been told that where La Fleur's hotel once stood a museum was being built. To sentimental travellers, perhaps, this destruction of old landmarks was as worthy of tears as a dead donkey.---But it is easier to weep in a private post-chaise than in the open streets.

We got through the town without trouble, but we could not ride even after we went round the city-gate that Hogarth did paint, and to which we gave
but

but a passing glance. It was only beyond the long, commonplace, busy suburb of St. Pierre that the *parvé* ended and the good road began.

The morning was cool, the sky grey with heavy clouds, and the south wind we were soon to dread was blowing softly. It seemed a matter of course, since we were in France, that we should come out



almost at once on a little river. It ran in a long line between reeds, towards a cluster of red-roofed cottages, and here and there fishermen sat or stood on the banks. When it forsook its straight course, the
road

road and the street-car track from Calais went winding with it,—grassy plains, where cows and horses wandered, stretching seaward on the right. In front we looked to a low range of blue hills, that gradually took more definite shape and colour as we rode. They were



very near when we came to Guignes, a silent, modest little village, for all its royal associations and memories of the “Field of the Cloth of Gold.” On its outskirts old yellow houses rose right on the river’s edge; and when we passed, a girl in blue skirt stood in one doorway, sending

sending a bright reflection into the grey water, and in another an old man peacefully smoked his pipe, taking it from his mouth to beg we would carry packets for him to Paris. Behind one cottage, in the garden among the apple-trees, was a large canal boat, like a French Rudder Grange. Beyond, high steep-roofed houses faced upon the street, and the stream was lined with many barges. ---But just here we turned from river and street-car track to walk to the other end of the town, over *pavé* and up a steep hill, where we were told by a blushing young man, in foreign English, that we had but to follow the diligence then behind us if we would reach Marquise.

Though we thought this a rare jest at the time, we carried his advice out almost to the letter.---We had come to the *terrible mountains* for which we had
been

been prepared in Calais. It is at this point, according to Mr. Ruskin, that France really begins, the level stretch we first crossed being virtually but part of Flanders. 'Tis a bad beginning, from a cyclist's ideal. For many miles I walked—and even J—— at times—along the white road, barren of the poplars one always expects in France, over the rolling treeless moors,



where we were watched out of sight
by gleaners, their white caps and dull
blue

blue skirts and sacks in pale relief against a grey blue-streaked sky ; and by ploughmen, whose horses, happier than they, ate their dinners as they worked.---Always to the north of the moorland was the grey sea-line, and farther still the white cliffs of England.



Sometimes I rode, for each tiny village nestled in a valley of its own, giving us a hill to coast as well as to climb. There were occasional windmills in the distance ; and close to the road large farm-houses and barns, with high sloping red roofs and huge troughs in front, where we knew cattle would come in the twilight and horses would be watered in the morning. And when Calais, with smoking chimneys, was far behind and below, we came to black crosses by the wayside and better manners

manners among the people. The peasants now wished us good-day.



At this early stage there was nothing we looked for less than trouble with the tricycle. It had been carefully put in order by the manufacturers before we left London. But now already the luggage-carrier loosened, and swung around on the back-bone of the machine. Do
what

what we would, we could not keep it straight again. In Marquise we bought a leather strap, in hopes to right it, and there also ate our lunch.---From the window of the *estaminet* we could see that the men and boys who came up to examine the tricycle never once touched it, while a man with a cart of casks, though it was in his way, rather than disturb it, stopped a little farther down the street, and rolled the casks along the pavement. Inside the *estaminet*, the brisk, tidy woman who cooked and served our coffee and omelette, kept talking of the weather and France and the tricycle, and what a wise manner of travelling was ours. My faith! from the railway one sees nothing.

But, indeed, for hours afterwards we saw as little as if we had been in a rail-road train. We were conscious only of the great hills to be climbed, and of our incessant

incessant trouble with the luggage-carrier. The new strap did not mend matters. Every few minutes the carrier with the bag took an ugly swing to one side.---We never began to enjoy a coast, we never got fairly started on an upgrade, that it did not force us to stop and push it straight. And then the lamp in its turn loosened, and every few kilometres had to be hammered into place.

The other incidents of that long afternoon I remember merely because of their association with hills. It was at the top of one, where I arrived breathless, we had our first view of the dome and monument of Boulogne ; it was at the bottom of another that we came to the *pavé* of Wimille ; it was half-way on a third, up which J—— worked slowly, standing up on the pedals and leaning far over to grasp the front handle bars, while

while I walked, that I was stopped by an Englishman and Englishwoman.——



“Oh,” said the man, as he watched J——, “you’re making a walking tour together, I suppose?”

“We’re riding!” cried I, aghast.

“Oh!” he exclaimed, “I see; you ride by turns.”

—I was so stupefied by his impudence or ignorance that at first I could say nothing. Then,——

“We ride together,” said I; “and
we’ve

we've come from England, and we're going to Paris and Lyons, into Savoy, and over the Mont Cenis pass."

—And with that I turned my back and left them, open-mouthed, in the middle of the road.

But their unconscious sarcasm had its sting. The thought that if these hills went on I might really have to walk half-way to Italy almost brought sentiment to an end.—

"Boulogne! and 'tis but half-past three. We'll go on," said J—.

—As we did not even enter the town, I cannot of my own knowledge say if there is anything in it worth seeing. But from the outside we learned that it has a picturesque old city-gate under the shadow of the dome; that the people are polite, and some of the men wear baggy blue breeches; and that close to the grim grey walls is an
unpaved

unpaved tree-lined boulevard which is very good riding. It led to a down-



grade which a woman called a *terrible mountain*, though she thought it might be "*good for you others.*"

Only the highest ranges are mountains to an Italian, but to a Frenchman the merest hillock is *une montagne terrible*

rible.---The hill outside of Boulogne was steep, but unrideable only on account of the *pavé*. And, oh! the *pavé* that afternoon! We went up *pavé* and down *pavé*, and over long level stretches of *pavé*, until, if any one were to ask me what there is between Boulogne and Pont-de-Brique, my only answer would be *pavé*! We had heard of it before ever we landed in France, but its vile-ness went beyond our expectation. The worst of it was, that for the rest of our journey we were never quite rid of it. To be sure it was only once in a long while we actually rode over it, but then we had always to be on the look-out. We came to it in every town and vil-lage; we found bits of it in lonely coun-try districts; it lay in wait for us on hill-sides. The French roads without the *pavé* are the marvels of symmetry, cleanliness, and order Mark Twain calls
them

them. If they are not jack-planed and sandpapered, they are at least swept every day. With the *pavé*, they are the ruin of a good machine and a better temper. And yet, all things considered, France is the cyclist's promised land.

By the time we reached Pont-de-Brique the luggage-carrier hung on by one screw. Fortunately we found a carpenter in a *café*, and he and J—— went to work.---In the meantime I saw, under the shade of a clump of trees, a green cart with windows and chimney, a horse grazing near by, and a man and woman sitting in front of a fire kindled on the grass. I walked towards the cart.——

“*Kushto divvus, Pal te Pen*” (“Good-day, brother and sister”), said I.

“What?” asked the woman, without looking up from the tin-pan she was mending.

“*Kushto*



“*Kushto divvus*,” said I, louder ; adding, “*Me shom une Romany chi*” (“I’m a Gipsy”).

“*Comment ?*” she repeated peevishly. “I do not understand you.”

—The man still tinkered at his pots.

I chaffed them in my best Romany, but they took no further heed. I tried French. I said I was a Gipsy come from over the seas, with news of their brothers in America.—

“But we’re not Gipsies,” said they ; “we live in Boulogne, and we’re busy.”

—I declare I never was so snubbed in my life !

’Twas but six quarters of an hour on foot to Neuchâtel, the carpenter told us. ---The road in the late afternoon was full of fine carriages and shabby carts ; and in sight of Neuchâtel we passed
men

men and women going home from work. We asked one man if there was an inn in the town.—

"*Il-y-a-douze*," he answered, with great effort, and hurried on, so that we had not time to tell him we too could speak English.

We wondered so small a town should be so rich in inns. But *douze*, it seemed, was the English way of saying *deux*. A woman standing in the first doorway assured us there were but two—one opposite the church, and another, the *Pas de Cœur*—we understood her to say, around the corner.---At the foot of the hill we found the first, with *Boarding-House* in large black letters on its newly whitewashed walls. As there never was any sentiment in a Boarding-House except in Dr. Holmes' books, or any cheapness in a foreign hotel with an English sign, we looked for the other
inn

inn. But when we had wheeled up the street and down the street, until its want of heart became ours, we gave up the search and returned to the *Boarding-House*.



THE

THE BOARDING-HOUSE OF NEUCHÂTEL.

A FAT old landlady received us, after a glance at the tricycle had reassured her that to take us in did not mean to be taken in herself. She promised us dinner at six, and a room in the course of the evening. In the *café*, or outer kitchen, where she gave us chairs, an elderly Cinderella was blacking boots and peeling potatoes in the fireplace; a pretty girl was carrying tumblers and clean linen to a near room; another, with a big baby in her arms, gossiped with neighbours on the front steps. The landlady hurried
back

back to the small kitchen, through the open door of which we could see her bustling about among the pots and pans.

Presently a little man, in white trousers and brown velvet waistcoat, wandered in from the stable-yard to clink glasses with a friend at the bar, and drink without pause two mugs of beer and one glass of brandy. Then he gave us a dance and a song.

And then there came trooping into the room huntsmen with dogs and guns, and servants bearing long poles strung with rabbits, and three ladies in silks and gold chains and ribbons, and a small boy. The huntsmen were given cognac and absinthe ; the ladies were led away through a narrow passage, but they returned in a minute, with pitchers which they themselves filled from a barrel near the kitchen-door.

These

These were people of quality, it was plain. They had come in a carriage, and a private dressing-room was found for them. But for us, who had arrived on a machine we worked ourselves, a basin was set in the fireplace, where we too made a toilet as best we could.--- At seven the landlady, with upraised hands, rushed from the kitchen to say that---

“ *Mon Dieu !* the mutton cutlets *Monsieur* and *Madame* ordered have gone like a dream. What is to be done ? ”

—What, indeed ? And all the time we had supposed her preparations were for us.

A little later, when dinner still seemed a remote possibility, in searching for our bag which had been carried off, I came by chance upon a dining-room where the cloth was laid and the
table

table was gay with lights and flowers. But when I hurried back with the good news to J—— he was less hopeful.——

“We had to wash in the fireplace,” said he.

—We were not long in doubt. The ladies and the huntsmen were ushered into the dining-room. The pretty girl in her neat apron carried in the soup, the fish, the cutlets. We could hear a pleasant clattering of plates and the sound of laughter. But still we sat in our humble corner.---Seldom have we felt class distinctions so bitterly. At last the landlady, very warm and red from the kitchen fire, with the baby in her arms, bade us follow her into a large dark room on the farther side of the *café*-kitchen. There she laid a modest omelette on a rough wooden table guiltless of cloth, and we ate it by the light
of

of one candle. The huntsmen's servants packed the rabbits and drank coffee on our left; on our right a little tailor stitched away at brown velveteens. Villagers strolled in and out, or played billiards; and a stray dog, unbidden, sat upright and begged at our side.---We cut but a poor figure in the Boarding-House of Neuchâtel.

We should have gone to bed at once, so tired were we after the *pavé* and the hills, but the sheets were not yet ironed. It was not until the kitchen clock struck ten that we were shown into a small closet where there was a bed, and promised a towel in the morning.---Before we went to sleep we heard, between the screams of the baby, the rain falling softly on the roof, to fill us with fears for the morrow's ride.

THE SOUTH WIND.

THE next day began well. Without, the rain had stopped, and the morning was bright and clear. Within, unfavourable social distinctions had ceased, since we were the only guests. If we were slighted at dinner, we were overwhelmed with attention at breakfast. The interest of the household centred upon us. Nothing was talked of but our journey. Every one was eager to advise. We must go here, we must go there; we must keep by the sea, we must turn inland; and, above all, declared the little tailor, who still stitched away, we must not rest until we rode into Paris. Ah, what a city
it

it was! He knew it well; but, my faith! a man must work to pay for life in the capital. He could see by the portfolio that *Monsieur* was an artist; no doubt he was on his way there to make great pictures.---We thought we could not please him better than to tell him in our country Paris was called the Paradise of good Americans. We were right. He made us a low bow, as if the compliment had been personal.

It was easy not to be bewildered by conflicting directions, since we were pre-determined not to be influenced by them. The fairest promise of good roads, enchanting country, and picturesque towns could not have turned us a hair's breadth from the route we had settled upon. The fact is, the question was one of sentiment, and at that stage of our enthusiasm where sentiment was concerned we were inflexible.---Mr. Sterne, on his
way

way to Amiens and Paris, passed by Montreuil. To Montreuil, therefore, we must go.

A good strong breeze blew from the south. Out at sea it swept the white foam before it, and above, it lashed the clouds into fantastic shapes. It caught the skirts of the gleaners on their way to the yellow fields, and of the women going towards Neuchâtel, and held them back at every step. But we were saved the struggle while we rode eastward. Now we were on a level with the sea, looking at it across grassy plains and sandy stretches ; and now it lay far below, and we saw it over the tree-tops on the hill-side ; again it was hidden by high dunes and dense pine-groves. Little villages lay in our way : Dannes, with pretty, shady road leading into it and out of it ; another, for us nameless, with thatched white cottages, standing in a dreary waste, a broad inlet to one side. And

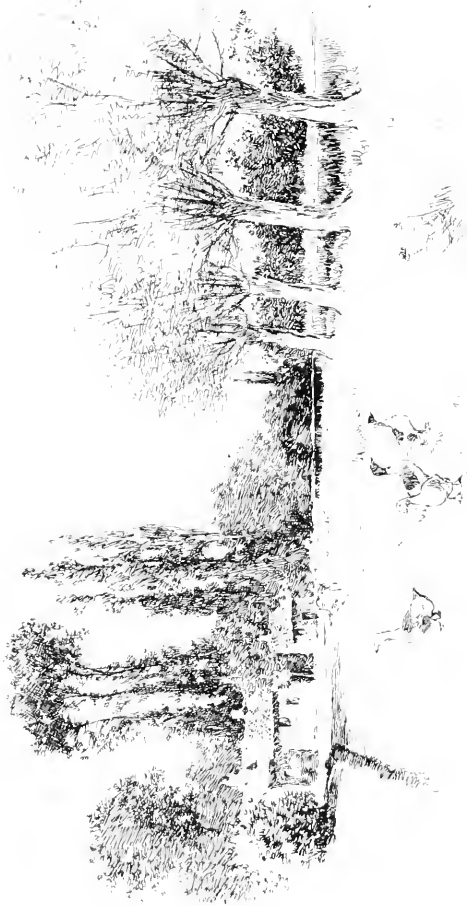
at

at last a short ride between young green trees brought us to Etaples, a town of low white houses built close to the shore, and at the same time to the end of the day's easy riding.

Our only memories of Etaples are unpleasant. We there bought a bottle of



bad oil for a good price. When we left Neuchâtel the machine needed oiling ; but the top of our oil-can had not been made to fit, and when we opened the tool-bag the can was in the oil instead of the oil in the can.---After using the poor stuff sold us by a shoemaker, the tricycle ran even more heavily. This was unfortunate, for after Etaples the
road



road left the sea and started for the south. There was nothing to be done but to put our heads down and to work as if we were record-making.---I do not think it wrong, merely because the wind blew in our faces almost every day of our sentimental journey, to therefore say the prevalent winds in France are from the south ; but indeed all the trees thereabouts bend low towards the north, to confirm this assertion.

Thus we rode on between fields bare as the moors ; through lovely park-like country ; by little shady rivers, where ducks were swimming in the deep-green water ; by tiny villages ; by little churches, grey and old ; by crosses, some split and decaying ; through long avenues, with poplars on either side ; by hills, the ploughman on the top strongly marked against the blue sky ; and all the way the road was only a little worse than asphalt.

D

It

It was noon, and school-children were running home to dinner when we reached



Montreuil. There were no less than three kilometres of *pavé* to be walked before we came into the town. We were further prepossessed against it because it has just enough character to stand upon a hill, instead of nestling in a hollow, as is the way with towns and villages in this part of the country. What with the wind and the *pavé* and the climb, we were so cast down that when by the city-gate, almost at the top of the hill, we saw a stone bearing the legend, "Two hundred kilometres to Paris," we wondered if sentiment would carry us that far.

MONTREUIL.

MONTREUIL.

THERE is not a town in all France which, in my opinion, looks better in the map than Montreuil. I own it does not look so well in the guide-book, but when you come to see it, to be sure it looks most pitifully.

There is promise of picturesqueness in a group of tumbled-down gabled houses at its entrance, and in a fine church doorway at one end of the *Place* where we lunched. But gables and doorway have been spared, I think, but to mislead the visitor with false hopes. The streets are lined with modern houses monstrously alike. The *Grande Place* is large enough to deserve its
name,

name, but as we saw it it was forlornly empty, silent, and dull. The gaiety of Montreuil has gone with the fiddling and drum-beating of La Fleur.

Despite its disadvantages, however, in the town where our Master compounded that little matter with the sons and daughters of poverty it was our duty to be sentimental. There was no question of travellers of our means and vehicle engaging a servant to fiddle and make splatter-dashes for us, even if another La Fleur could be produced. But if beggars sent in their claims, we could at least find in them the occasion of the first public act of our charity in France. Beggars, after a fashion, we did meet ; for at once an old woman — a poor tattered soul — begged we would let her grandson Jules show us the way to a restaurant ; and next a hatless man followed us around the *Place* to implore a
visit

visit to his hotel, where his wife could “spik Inglis”—a sound perhaps as worth money as the “My Lord Angolis” that won Mr. Sterne’s last sous. But our hearts were hardened against them, as his, too, might have been against those other miserables, had he not slept off the ill-humours of his journey to Montreuil.

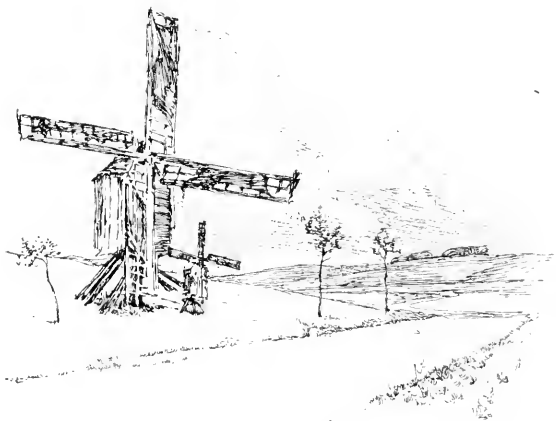
I think it was at Montreuil it first occurred to us that sentiment does not depend upon man’s will alone.---And so we got on our tricycle with no more ease than usual, but less, as the wind came howling over the plain to meet us.

Note.—J—— was too lazy, and said the morning was too hot to do anything but work the tricycle.

NAMPONT.

NAMPONT.

THE road between Montreuil and Nampont was for us classic ground. Breathlessness, because of the



wind, before we had got a league, brought our career—like La Fleur's—to

to a sudden stop. We then had time to see that the deathbed of the famous donkey lay in fair country. Near by two windmills turned their long arms swiftly. A sportsman banged away in the fields, and, to bring good-luck, two crows flew overhead. When we went on, the wind began to moderate, and by the time we reached Nampont it was making but a little noiseless noise among the leaves.

We thought Nampont a pretty vil-



lage, with its poplared canal flowing
without

without turn or twist to the far horizon, and its long, wide street lined with low houses. The first we came to, that had a stone bench by the door and an adjoining court, we decided



to be the post-house, in front of which the donkey's master told his pathetic tale. We appealed to an old man just then

passing. But he knew nothing of it, and there were so many other houses with stone seats and courts that we could not settle the matter to our satisfaction. ---We were only certain of the *pavé* over which Mr. Sterne's postillion set out in a full gallop that put him out of temper. Instead of galloping, we walked, first refreshing ourselves with *groseille*, a harmless

harmless syrup, in a brand-new *café* at the end of the village street, the one sign of modern enterprise in Nampont.

After this town, there was no sense of sentimental duty to oppress us, since a little beyond it Mr. Sterne went to sleep, a sweet lenitive for evils, which Nature does not hold out to the cyclist.



A CITY IN MOURNING.

THE straight, poplared road to Abbeville still lay across a golden plain, with no interest save its beauty, here and there bounded by a row of trees, yellow haystacks standing out in bold relief against them; and here and there nar-



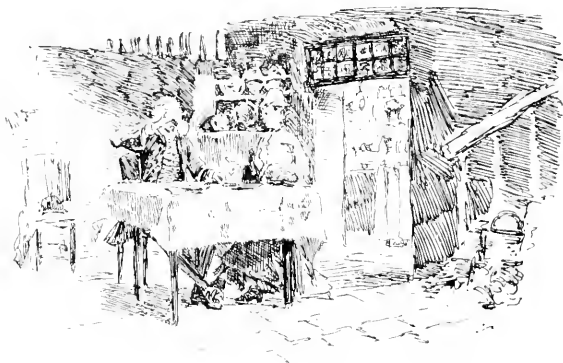
rowed by dark woods, in front of which
an old white-haired shepherd or little
white-capped

white-capped girl watched newly sheared sheep. Now and then the way led



through small blue villages. There was Airon, where a large party of gleaners, old and young men, women, boys, and girls, sitting by the wayside, jumped up of one accord and walked with us up the hill. And then came Nouvion, where we saw a fine old rambling yellow farmhouse, over whose disreputably tilted front-door peered two grotesque heads, and where we had coffee in the village inn,

inn, sitting on the one dry spot in the flooded floor, and just escaping the mops



and buckets of two women who had raised the deluge.

The hills we still had. To read the "Emblems of the Frontispiece" in "Coryate's Crudities," one would imagine that from Montreuil to Abbeville was one long endless descent.

"Here, not up Holdbourne, but down a steepe
hill,

Hee's carried 'twixt Montrell and Abbeville."

But

But I remember many steep up-grades to be climbed beside that of Airon.

Just about Nouvion the road was bad, because, so a friendly *cantonnier* said, there had been no rain for more than two months. He promised it would improve seven or eight kilometres farther on, and prepared us for a crowd in Abbeville, whither *all the world* had gone to take part in the funeral celebrations of Admiral Courbet, who by this hour of the afternoon was no doubt already buried.---A little later *all the world* seemed on its way home, and the road was full of carts, carriages, and pedestrians. It was no easy matter to steer between the groups on foot and the waggons driving sociably side by side. The crowd kept increasing, once in its midst a bicycler wheeling by to throw us a haughty stare. There were as many people on another straight poplar-lined

poplar-lined road that crossed the *Route Nationale*. At this rate it was possible we should find no one left in the town, and the hotels, therefore, not more crowded than usual. So there was as much cheerful, unalloyed pleasure as Mr. Ruskin himself experienced—and which he believes is not to be had from railway trains or cycles—in our getting into sight of Abbeville far below in the valley of the Somme, two square towers dominant over the clustered house-roofs.

On the outskirts of the city we saw the cemetery, a little to our right. The funeral procession, with flags, banners, and crosses borne aloft, was about to return from the grave. We felt so out of keeping with its solemnity that, rather than wait on the sidewalk as it passed, we hurried on at once.---But there was no going fast. In a minute we were jolting on the *pavé* again,
and

and the street was more crowded than the road. *All the world* had but begun to go home. People walked on the pavement and in the street. Windows were filled with eager faces ; benches and platforms in front of shops were still occupied. Houses were draped in black, flags hung here, there, and everywhere, and funeral arches were set up at short distances.

Our position was embarrassing. Try our best, we could not, unnoticed, make our way through the crowd. Every minute we had to call out to citizens or peasants in front to let us by. The people at the windows and on the benches, waiting idly to see the end of the day's solemn show, at once caught sight of the tricycle. Do what we would, all eyes were turned towards it. And, to our horror, the funeral procession gained upon us. The chants of priests
and

and acolytes were in our very ears. We jumped down and walked. But it was no use. In a few minutes we were on a line with the cross-bearer, leading the way for clergy and mourners through the streets. There was no escape. We could not turn back ; we could not out-distance them. But, fortunately, before an archway at the entrance to a large *Place* the procession was disbanded. Without further ceremony, priests, stole and surplice under their arms, stray bishops in purple robes, naval and army officers, gentlemen in dress-coats and many medals, school-boys in uniform, peasants in caps, townspeople in ordinary clothes, walked home- or hotel-wards, we pushing the tricycle in their midst.

At the Hôtel de France we found confusion. Waiters tore in and out of the kitchen ; maids flew up and down the court-yard



After
J. S. M. (1870)

court-yard. Frantic men and women surrounded and together asked a hundred questions of a poor waiter in the centre of the court; an English family clamoured for a private dining-room. ---During a momentary lull we stepped forward and told this waiter, who seemed a person of authority, we should like a room for the night.

There was not one to be had, he said. If we would wait two or three hours, it was just *very possible* some of these *Messieurs* might go back to Paris. If not we must travel into another country; he knew we should fare no better in any hotel in Abbeville. Last night he had turned away fifty people.——

Where was the next country, asked I, for in his disappointment J—— had lost all his French.

It was only seven kilometres off. But, he added, we could dine in the hotel.

—Our

—Our choice lay between a certain good dinner at once and a mere possibility later in a far-off town. We were both tired and hungry.—

“It will be dark in half an hour,” said I.

“We can never work after eating heartily,” said J——, and, our objections thus disposed of, we decided for immediate dinner, and to risk the consequences.

—We wheeled the machine into the stable, conveniently adjoining the dining-room. We were not very fresh



after a day's ride through the wind, over dry and dusty roads, and as we were to dine in company with dignitaries of State and Church, I said that first we should like to make our toilet. “Oh, certainly,” said the waiter, “*Voilà!*”

and he pointed to a small spicket and a handkerchief

handkerchief of a towel at the dining-room door.---With no more elaborate preparation than these permitted, we went in and took our seats at table with bishops, officers, and statesmen in full dress.

It was as we expected. When we had eaten a dinner worthy of the company, we were unwilling to ride farther. We could and would not leave Abbeville that night.---J—— was silent over his sponge-cakes and wine, speaking only once, to consult me about the future tense of French verbs. Then he called the waiter.——

“Is there a room yet?” I asked.

“Not yet, *Madame*,” and he bowed his regrets.

“Well, then,” said J——, turning full upon him with the speech he had been ten minutes in composing, “*nous partirons pas si nous dormirons sur la table!*”

—Hitherto

—Hitherto I had been his spokeswoman. The consequence of his sudden outburst in French was the waiter's hearty assurance that the first room at his disposal was ours, but we must not look for it until nine or ten. It was then a little after seven.

This interval was spent in wandering about the town. The wind and the *pavé* together had again made me very tired. I remember as a restless dream our walk up and down the streets; into the great *Place*, a sombre black catafalque on one side, lights burning around it, tall houses back of it, the still taller Church of St. Wulfran rising above the high gables; and next into the church itself, where the columns and arches and altars, draped in black, and the people kneeling at prayer, or coming and going in the aisles, were but dimly seen by the light of a few candles. I remember
speculating

speculating on the chance of shelter there, if at the eleventh hour the hotel



failed us. And then we were shut out by the sacristan, to again wander through narrow, twisting streets; through brighter, livelier thoroughfares, the shops open, citizens and peasants laughing and talking; and so back to the *Place*, roofs and towers now but a black shadow on the dark blue of the evening sky; and at last to the hotel, where the good waiter met us with smiles.---A room at last! It was not very commodious, but it was the best he could do. There followed a melancholy quarter of an hour,

hour, during which we sat on a heap of blankets in a dark passage while the *garçon* laid the sheets.---The waiter was right; the room was not the most commodious. It was directly over the stable, and not larger than an old-fashioned closet. But it was better than church or dining-room; and though the *garçon* kept passing on the balcony without, and there was a ceaseless clatter in the court below, I was soon asleep.



FAITHFUL

FAITHFUL ABBEVILLE.

IT is a pity that most tourists go straight from Calais to Amiens, satisfied to know Abbeville as a station by the way. The fault, I suppose, lies with "Murray" and "Baedeker," who are almost as curt with it as with Montreuil, giving but a few words to its Church of St. Wulfran, and even fewer to its quaint old houses. But the truth is, Abbeville is better worth a visit than many towns they praise. And though Mr. Tristram Shandy objected to one of its inns as unpleasant to die in, I can recommend another as excellent to live in, which, after all, is of more importance to the ordinary tourist.

We

We remained in Abbeville the next day until noon. We went again to the church. We saw the house of Francis I. We found our way into alleys and courtyards, where grotesques were grinning and winking, as if they thought it an exquisite joke at last to be taken seriously by the few art and architectural critics, who now come to look at them.



CRUSHED AGAIN.

AND now Mr. Ruskin writes :—" I not only object, but am quite prepared to spend all my best 'bad language' in reprobation of bi-tri-and-4-5-6 or 7-cycles, and every other contrivance and invention for superseding human feet on God's ground. To walk, to run, to leap, and to dance are the virtues of the human body, and neither to stride on stilts, wriggle on wheels, or dangle on ropes, and nothing in the training of the human mind with the body will ever supersede the appointed God's ways of slow walking and hard working."

" Oh well, let us go on," said J——.

A

A B Y - R O A D .

BECAUSE of our sight-seeing we made a late start from Abbeville.

--- But then we determined to go no farther than Amiens that day. It was a good ten minutes' walk over the *parvé* from the hotel to the end of the long

Rue St. Gilles, where it is crossed by the railroad.---

Here we were kept waiting another five minutes, in company with a carriage and two covered carts, while the woman in charge, who had shut the gate, put on her

official hat and cape. Presently a faint whistle was heard.——



“ Hold ! ”

“ Hold ! ” said one of the drivers. “ I think he comes.”

—And so *he* did, and at last we were allowed to pass and go our way. --- Another weary kilometre of *parvé*, and then we were on the highroad between the poplars.

But when we had got off the stones there was still the wind to fight. It blew in our faces with never-relaxing vigour, rushing through the trees and over the plain as if in haste to reach the sea. To make matters worse, the road was bad. The cavalry had ruined it, a stone-breaker said. We were soon riding on the side-walk. --- The few white-capped, blue-skirted pedestrians we met went obligingly into the road to let us pass. —

“ Pardon, ladies,” said we.

“ Of nothing,” said they.

“ The road is so bad,” we explained.

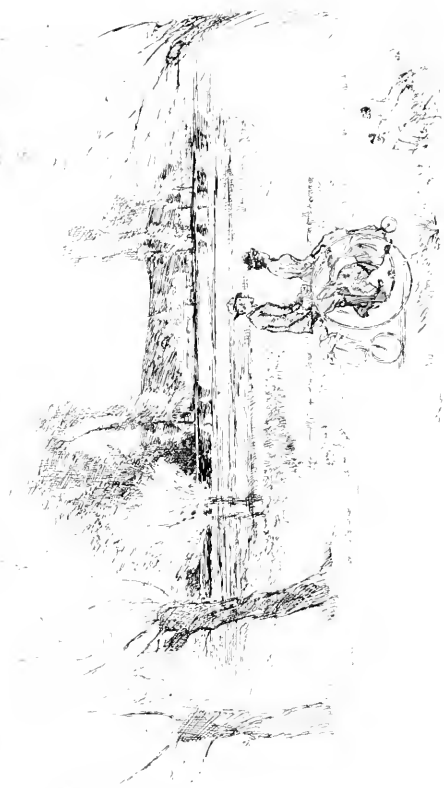
“ You

“ You have reason. *Au revoir*,” cried they.

—The road ran straight along the edge of the upland. Below, a pretty river wound among reeds and willows, overtopped by tall trees shivering in the wind. But hard work gave us little chance for pleasure in the landscape, until at Pont Remy we stopped on the bridge to take breath.

We went back to the pedals with sad misgivings, like people who know that the worst is still to come. Just beyond, we left the *Route Nationale* for a by-road and unmitigated misery. Here we were led to believe there was no other road between Abbeville and Amiens. Amiens, “ the very city where my poor lady is to come,” we could not miss. And yet Italian experience made us doubt the advisability of turning off the highroad.

The



The wind was now directly in our faces, and the road was deep with sand and loose with stones, and we had not gone a mile, a mile but scarcely one, when we lost our tempers outright and sent sentiment to the winds. First we climbed a long up-grade, passing old crumbling grey churches decorated with grotesques and gargoyles like those on St. Wulfran's, in Abbeville, some perched upon hillocks, with cottages gathered about them, others adjoining lonely chateaux ; and riding through forlornly poor villages full of houses tumbling to pieces and vicious dogs. Hills rose to our left ; to our right, in the valley below, were wide marshes covered with a luxurious green growth, and beyond, the river, on the other side of which was a town with a tall church rising in its centre.

Once we got down to drink syrup and
water

water at an inn where a commercial traveller catechised us about America.—

“And the commerce, it goes well there? Yes?”

—I suppose he took us for fellow-drummers; and I must admit the idea of our travelling for pleasure over such roads was the last likely to occur to him.

Then we went down hill for some distance, but we ran into ridges of sand and brought up suddenly on a stone pile at the bottom. On the level the road became a shady avenue. But it grew worse as it increased in beauty. We wheeled first to one side, then to the other. We even tried the grass close to the trees. But soon we were down and walking, and pushing the wretched machine through the sand. And now riding was out of the question, it began to rain. When we came into Hangest—

“We’ll take the train,” said J—.

—But

—But we had first to wait for two hours, during which we ate a lunch at the “Sign of the Duck,” and sat at the station watching the passing trains and the signals.---In his demoralisation J——asked at the office for tickets for *la treizième classe*, and then a man joined us and told us of the fine roads in his country, so that we wished we were there. Finally our train came.---J——had some trouble with the machine. At the first baggage-car the conductor declared there was not room for it. The second was full and no mistake. He went back to the first, and while the conductor remonstrated, pushed it in with the help of a porter. He then had just time to jump into the nearest carriage, which happened to be the same in which I had already found a seat, and the train started. The carriage was full.——

“ *C’est*

"*C'est complet, Monsieur,*" screamed a little man, in a passion.

"Certainly, *Monsieur,*" said J——, as he fastened the door with a click behind him.

"I tell you it's full," repeated the little man, in his rage dancing to the window and calling the conductor.

—It was too late. All he could do was to return to his seat and glower at J——, who calmly sat in the window.—

"We must not make the war," said a good *curé* next to him, patting him gently on the shoulder.

—He restrained his anger with a comforting drink of brandy. *Monsieur le Curé* fell to saying his beads, covering his mouth with his wide-brimmed hat, while all the other passengers laughed and nudged each other. A man in the corner, carrying a genuine American carpet-bag

carpet-bag, drank something from a gingerbeer bottle, and asked us in good American what we knew of the hotels in Paris.

At the next station J—— got out, and the man from the country of beautiful roads, who had been sitting in the adjoining compartment, met him at the door.——

“ I render to you my place, *Monsieur*,” said he.

—And so in perfect peace we made all possible speed to Picquigny, and from Picquigny to Amiens ; not, however, before we saw from the carriage windows that the road, now running alongside of the railway, was smooth and hard, that the sun shone, and that the wind blew but mildly.

At Amiens the conductor was waiting on the platform full of apologies. He had really thought there was no room
for

for the velocipede. *Monsieur* must pardon him.

The French have a charming way of putting you in a good humour. We forgot the attack of the irascible traveller, as, let us hope, he forgave the enormity of J——'s crime.



AMIENS.

AMIENS.

WE should always remember Amiens, even were it not for the cathedral, because it was there we had the best dinner we ever ate in France.---In looking over my note-book I find I made at the time elaborate mention of the *menu*, and applied the adjective *divine* to a course of fresh mackerel served with an exquisite sauce.---As there may be readers who take interest, and perhaps pleasure, in dining well, I will here add that this excellent meal was eaten at the Hôtel de l'Univers. I can wish the visitor to Amiens no better
luck



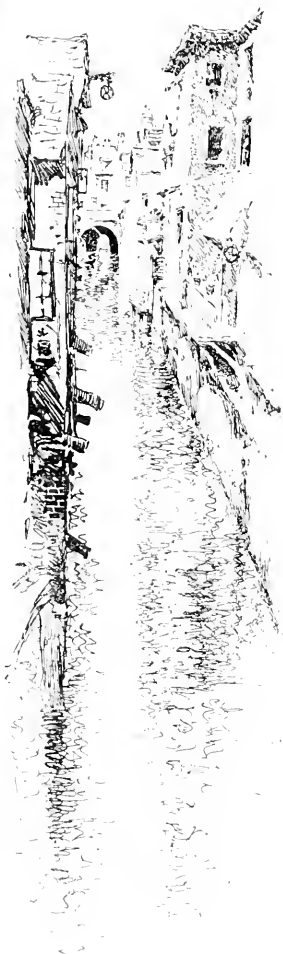
luck than a dinner in this hotel prepared by the same artist.

It was a pity that, before leaving England—we had been so taken up with Mr. Sterne, whose sentiment was not to be distracted with cathedrals and old houses—we did not consult Mr. Ruskin, who probably thought of nothing else while he was in Amiens.---To the unsentimental traveller I would recommend the traveller's edition of "Our Fathers have Told Us" (Part I. chap. iv.), rather than the "Sentimental Journey," as a guide-book to the town.

We had two hours of daylight on the afternoon of our arrival, and we remained in the city until noon the next day, partly because there were many things to see, and partly on account of a heavy wind and rainstorm in the morning. We were not much troubled by sentiment, though here Mr. Sterne's over-
flowed

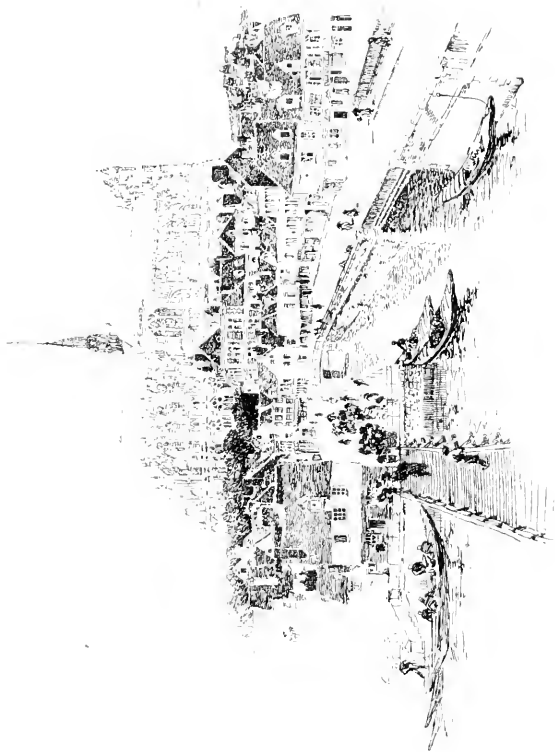
flowed into three chapters. But it was of a kind so impossible for us to simulate—not having left an Eliza in England, nor knowing a fair Countess in the town—we put all thought or hope of it aside, and went out to look about.

What pleased us most were the many canal-like branches of the Somme, old tumbled-down houses rising from the water, and little foot-bridges connecting them with opposite gardens. We liked, too, the wider
and



and less modest main current of the river, where men or women in flat boats with pointed prows and square sterns, like inclined planes, were for ever poling themselves down stream beyond the embankment where the poplars begin.--- But I remember we lingered longest on a bridge over a tiny canal from which there was a fine view of disreputably shabby back doors, women appearing and disappearing as they emptied their pails and pots, and of battered windows from which hung the family wardrobes. It was then, I believe, we pronounced Amiens the French Venice—an original idea which most likely occurs to every tourist fortunate enough to find his way to the banks of the Somme. Indeed I have since read that in the good old days before a straight street had been dreamed of by city officials, the town was known as Little Venice.

Delightful



Delightful as were the scenes by the river in the late afternoon, they were even more so in the early morning, when, from under a borrowed umbrella, we watched the open-air market. The embankment was carpeted with greens and full of noisy peasants. The prevailing tint, like that of the sky above, was a dull bluish grey, relieved here and there by a dash of white. Fastened to rings in the stone wall of the embankment, some thirty or forty of the boats with pointed prows lay on the water. Two, piled high with cabbages and carrots, the brightest bit of colour in the picture, were being poled towards the market-place. Others, laden with empty baskets, satisfied-looking women in the prow, a man at the stern, were on their homeward way. And above the river and the busy people and the background of houses the great cathedral loomed

loomed up, a "mass of wall, not blank, but strangely wrought by the hands of foolish men of long ago."

We found a priest saying Mass in the chapel behind the choir, the eastern light shining on him at the altar. His congregation consisted of four poor women and one great lady in silk attire kneeling in the place of honour. In the nave and aisles were a handful of tourists and two sentimental travellers—*i.e.*, ourselves, who scorned to be classed as tourists—uttering platitudes under their breath about the unspeakable feeling of space and height, as if the cathedral existed but to excite their wonder.

We went also to the old belfry, a fine substantial pile, allowed to stand, I suppose, because to remove it would be too herculean a task. Our attention was distracted from it to a pair of French twins staggering by, arm in arm, both wearing
baggy

baggy brown velveteen trousers, striped shirts and open coats, and little round caps, which rested on each curly head at exactly the same

angle. It was rather absurd to discover that they were no greater oddities to us than we were to them.

Of one accord they stopped to solemnly stare at J——'s knee-breeches and long stockings.

Indeed I might as well say here, as in any other place, that we

were greater objects of curiosity off the machine than on it.---Always, as in Calais, the eminently quiet and respect-



WIND, POPLARS, AND PLAINS.

THERE is nothing more pleasing to a traveller, or more terrible to travel-writers, than a large rich plain, unless it be a straight white poplar-lined road, good as asphalt. After Amiens, as after Abbeville and Neuchâtel, there was a poplared avenue over a breezy upland to carry us to the next town, that town little more but a new place to start from to the next plain and poplars, and so on. There were *cantonniers* still at work, sweeping the highway with great brooms.—

“You sweep them every day?” asked J—— of one.

“Every

“Every day—yes,” he answered.



—And there was still a strong wind rushing down between the trees and blowing my skirts about my feet. Riding against it was such hard work that I walked many kilometres during the morning. But indeed there was scarce any walking with ease.

We were glad many of the towns and villages were in little valleys. After hours, perhaps, of steady pedalling, it was pleasant to coast down a long hill, while a country postman stopped in his struggle with a French operative umbrella

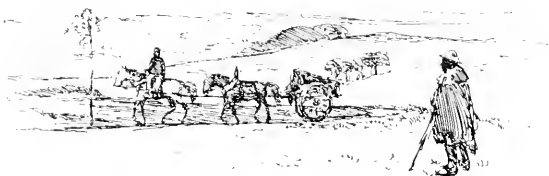
turned

turned inside out by the wind, to smile and show the loss of all his front teeth, as he cried——

“Ah, but it goes well!”

—And then, alas! came another hill, this time to be climbed, and the admiration changed to sympathy.

I remember in particular an old woman on the hill outside of Amiens, who was sorry there was still a long way



up the mountain. When we asked her how far it was to the top——

“Behold!”

“Behold!” said she, and pointed a few yards ahead.



In an insignificant village near the Forest of Drouy—the one wooded oasis in the treeless plain—our *café-au-lait* was for the first time served in the basins to whose size our eyes and appetites were quickly to be accustomed.

In a second, where there was an old grey church with grinning gargoyles, a pedler's cart, big bell hanging in front,

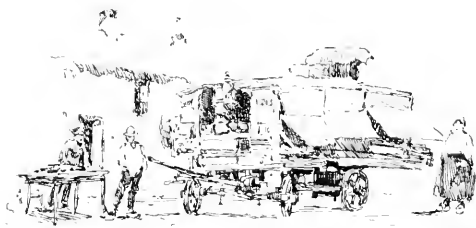


tempting wares displayed, blocked the way.—

“It is a *bon marché* you have here,”
said



said J—— to the pedler, with a polite-



ness that would not have disgraced a Frenchman.

—In Breteuil, a good-sized town with fair share of *pavé*, we met another funeral party—gentlemen in long black frock-coats and antiquated silk hats.



They had come down from Paris to bury

a

a most virtuous lady, we learned from the proprietor of the *café*. They were vastly taken with the tricycle, however, testing its saddles while we drank our syrup and water.

It was a beautiful ride we should now have to St. Just, the proprietor foretold. It would be level all the way.—“What!

no hills?” we asked.

None, he declared, that deserved the name.—It is needless to add that

we at once came to three

or four up which we pushed the machine, because of their steepness. But much could we forgive him. He it was who counselled us to spend the night at the Cheval Blanc in St. Just, where we had a plenteous brave dinner and the greatest civility that ever we had from any man, as Pepys would say. Besides, the latter part of the ride was lovelier
than



than his foretelling. The wind abated, and work was so easy we could look out over the fields to the distant villages, their church spires white in the sunlight or turned to grey, even as we watched, by a passing cloud. It is for just



such happy intervals the cyclist braves wild winds and high hills. The day, it is true, was from beginning to end uneventful. But we had not looked or hoped for adventures.---Of his journey between Amiens and Paris our Master says not a word. Mr. Tristram Shandy recalls his but to regret that he was then prevented by troublesome postillions, from gratifying his kindly propensity to sleep. Therefore we felt, that to-day at least, we had no sentimental shortcomings with which to reproach ourselves.

The

The sun had set, and Gipsies by the roadside were preparing their evening meal when we came to the *parv'* of St. Just.



THE COMMERCIAL GENTLEMEN
OF ST. JUST.

AT the Cheval Blanc the landlady gave us a room over the stable on the farther side of a large court-yard.

From the window we looked down into the court on chickens and ducks, and on a woman watering a small vegetable garden, and the poultry and vegetables reminded us that we had not dined. So we went to the *café* of the hotel, where *Ma-*



dame stayed our hunger with the over-
grown

grown lady fingers that are served with dessert at every well-regulated *table d'hôte*, and where a small man in a frock-coat and Derby hat, with a very loud voice, exchanged political opinions with a large man in a blue blouse with no voice to speak of; while a third, in white blouse and overalls, stood and listened in neutral silence.

The discussion was at its liveliest when the dinner-bell rang, and we hurried off in such indecent haste that we were the first to arrive in the dining-room. We knew as soon as we saw the pots of mignonette and geranium and the well-trimmed, well-shaded lamps on the table, that whoever had placed them there must have prepared dishes worthy to be served by their sweet scent and soft light, and we were not disappointed.---I have seldom eaten a better dinner. We were ten altogether
at

at table. Seven men were guests like ourselves. One was an unwearying sportsman of France. The six others we soon discovered to be commercial gentlemen, though what so many travellers could find to do in one such small place was a mystery we do not pretend to solve. *Madame*, the landlady, was the tenth in the company. She presided in person, not at the head, but at the centre of one side of the table. We sat directly opposite, encompassed about with drummers and touters.—

“*Monsieur* and *Madame* arrived from Amiens on a velocipede,” said the landlady, opening the conversation and the soup-tureen at the same moment.

—The sportsman started to speak, hesitated, coughed, and fell to feeding his dogs with bread. The commercial gentlemen wanted to know at what hotel we stopped in Amiens.

At

At this moment a diversion was made by the entrance of a stout man with the smile of a clown and the short forked beard of a Mephistopheles, who took his place on *Madame's* right.—

“*Mon Dieu, Madame,*” said he, as a plate of soup was put in front of him and the tureen carried away, “I came next to you because I love you; and you would starve me? You would give me no more soup!”

“But you are greedy,” said *Madame*.

—The soup, however, was left on a side table.—

“I have been starved already to-day,” he went on, before we had time to answer the question put to us. “I slept last night at a *grand hôtel*. It was so *grand* that this morning for breakfast they could give me but cutlets of mutton and cutlets of pork and ham—and ham, one knows it well, it counts

counts for nothing. Is this not true, *Madame?*”

—He had had a wide and remarkable experience of hotels. He knew one. *Ma foi!* they swept it every day. But he knew another. *Dame!* there the floors were waxed and rubbed daily, so that if a beefsteak were to fall on them it would be as clean as if it fell upon a plate. For his part, however, he thought no hotel would be perfect until it made a law to give each guest a partridge and half a bottle of wine with his candle, in case of hunger during the night.

A little man with a light moustache, on *Madame's* left, as he amiably filled her glass with wine and seltzer, recalled a certain town where the hotels were closed at ten. He arrived at midnight; every door was shut. What did he do? He could not sleep in the street. He went to the *Mairie*.

The man next to J—— had heard of a hotel where if you stayed out after ten they would not permit you to enter even if they had your baggage. The proprietor would come to a window above when you knocked, and throw your trunks down rather than open the door. He then made no charge.—

“*Ma foi!*” thought Mephistopheles, who could no more have begun a sentence without an ejaculation than he could have eaten his dinner without wine, “he would take the *pavé* and throw it at the head of such a proprietor.”

—Then they turned to hear our experience. They appealed to J——.

“*O, nous,*” he began bravely, “*nous avons été en France pour deux jours seulement*”—then suddenly to me, “Oh, bother, you tell the fellow what he wants, and ask them if they know any
decent

decent hotels on the route," and he took out our route-form.

—I explained our intention to ride through France into Italy, and asked if they would have the goodness to recommend hotels by the way.

We could not have paid them a greater compliment. The next minute the route-form was passed from one to the other, and by the name of each town was written the name of a commercial hotel which meant a good dinner and a moderate bill. But not one of the houses in the *C. T. C. Handbook* was on the list.---Mr. Howells, in his *Italian Journeys*, declares it to be the evident intention of a French drummer, "not only to keep all his own advantages, but to steal some of yours upon the first occasion." I wish he could have seen these men at St. Just, as each helped his neighbour to wine before filling his
own

own glass. A commercial gentleman apparently would not think of not sharing his bottle with some one, or of not calling for another when his first was empty, in obedience to the sign seen in so many hotels, "*Vin à discrétion.*" It must be admitted that this is only what an Englishman would call "good form" in commercial circles, since one bottle always stands between two covers. But then, when did "good form" ever serve such practical ends in England?

We saw nothing of the French travellers' ill-breeding of which Mr. Howells so bitterly complains. If they talked, well, is it not their business to talk? Besides, they never once referred to trade or praised their wares. I know men of far higher professions who cannot boast of a like discretion. Indeed, is it not a common thing for
great

great men to give dinners for the express purpose of talking "shop?"---It is true Mephistopheles, when he wanted to call *Madame's* attention, beat on the table with his knife-handle and shouted in a voice of thunder——

"*Madame! Madame Emilie! Emilie! Bon Dieu!* gentlemen, she will not listen!"

—But if she took this in perfect good nature it was not for us to object. That she did not find fault was clear. While we were eating mutton I noticed he was served with a special dish of birds.

The excellence of the dinner and the good-humour of the company came to a climax with the course of beans. Mephistopheles asserted enthusiastically that had they not been invented already he would have invented them himself. *Monsieur* on *Madame's* left wondered
who

who brought them into France. Somebody suggested the Bishop of Soissons. As they all laughed this must have been a joke, but we could not understand it; and though I have since spent hours over it in the British Museum, I still fail to see the point.---The traveller next to J—— said nothing, but was twice helped to the favourite dish.

Afterwards in the *café Madame* introduced us to an Englishman who had lived thirty years in St. Just, and who was always glad to see his countrymen. We explained we were Americans, but he assured us it was an equal pleasure—he always liked to speak the English. ---Whatever else St. Just had done for him, it had made him forget his mother tongue.---He was much pleased with our tandem, which he had examined while we were at dinner. He rode a bicycle, and was therefore competent to
judge

judge its merits. He also thought ours a fine journey when we showed him our route on the map.

In the meantime, the commercial gentlemen had settled down to coffee and the papers, and the evening promised to be peaceful. But presently the little man with the light moustache, who had sat on *Madame's* left, put his paper down to comment on the advantages of naturalisation, on which subject he had just been reading an editorial. It was a great thing for the country, he thought, that the children of foreigners should be permitted to become Frenchmen.

But Mephistopheles was down upon him in an instant. He would not hear of naturalisation.—

“*Mon Dieu!* I am a Frenchman. I go to America or Austria. A son is born to me there. Is he an American
can

can or an Austrian? No, *Monsieur*, he is a Frenchman!" and he glared defiance.

—But the little man reasoned that, on the other hand, France was too hospitable not to take in strangers.

Mephistopheles swore it was not logical, and, what was more, it was against *la morale*, and *la morale* was *prime*. This was his clinching argument.

The dispute grew warm. They both left their coffee and walked up and down the room with great angry strides, beat themselves on their breasts, threw their arms to right and left; one would have thought blows were imminent. In passing they stopped simultaneously before the sportsman, who sat near me.—

"And you, sir, what do you say?"

"My faith, gentlemen, I say you are both too violent."

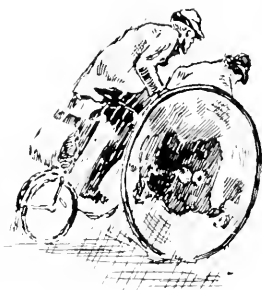
—Thus

—Thus startled into speech, he turned to me to explain his views.——

“A man wishes to adopt France. *Et bien ?* it is reasonable that France should adopt him.”

—When I looked around again the argument had been amicably adjusted over a backgammon board.

THROUGH



THROUGH THE RAIN.

THOUGH the Englishman was not on hand in the morning, *Madame*, all the commercial gentlemen except Mephistopheles, the waiter, and the postman, who was just then passing, stood out on the street to see us start.--- We carried away from St. Just not only pleasant recollections, but a handful of sticking

sticking labels of advertisement of the Cheval Blanc, which *Madame* pressed upon us as she shook hands.

The first place of note was Fitz-James, labelled in the convenient French fashion, its aggressive English name as unadaptable to foreign pronunciation as is English prejudice to foreign customs. There we pushed the tricycle to the other end of the town, then up the long hill into the principal street of Clermont, to find that the hill did not end with the *pavé*. There still remained a climb of two kilometres.

From the top of the hill outside of Clermont, six kilometres into Angy, we went with feet up as fast as the clouds, now ominously black. Of such a ride what should one remember save the rapid motion through fresh green country? Before we realised our pleasure we were in Angy, and then in Mouy,
which

which is literally next door, and where we lunched at a *café* with as little loss of time as possible.---We hoped to get to Paris that night. We were determined to take the train at Beaumont, since there were forty-seven kilometres of *pavé* from that town to the capital.---In our first enthusiasm, before our troubles came upon us, we had declared that nothing, not even *pavé*, would induce us to forswear sentiment and go by train. But, thanks to the few kilometres we had already bumped over, we were wiser now. All the old travellers over the post-roads complain of the *pavé*. Mr. Sterne, as at Nampont, found it a hindrance to sentiment. Before his day, Evelyn lamented that if the country, where the roads are paved with a small square freestone, “does not much molest the traveller with dirt and ill way as in England, ’tis somewhat hard to the poor horses’ feet,
which

which causes them to ride more temperately, seldom going out of the trot, or *grand pas*, as they call it."

If it is so hard to horses' feet, fancy what it must be to the tyres of a tri-cycle!

No sooner were we out of the town than the rain began. At first it was but a soft light shower. But it turned into a drenching pour just as we came into a grey thatch-roofed village. We took shelter by a stone wall under a tree. A woman offered to lend us her umbrella; we could send it back the next day, she insisted. This was the most disinterested benevolence shown us throughout the journey.

Presently we set out again, but only to retreat almost at once up a little vine-covered path leading to a cottage whose owner, when he saw us, invited us indoors. It seemed useless to wait, however.

ever. We had dragged the tricycle under the vines, but the rain dripped through and made the saddles wet and slippery. We thanked him kindly, put on our gossamers, and then plodded on through the driving rain over a sticky clay road. Now, almost blinded, we worked up long ascents between woods and fields where indefatigable sportsmen frightened what birds there were. Now we rode through deserted villages and by dreary châteaux.---Occasionally the rain stopped, only to begin the next second with fresh force. Against it our gossamers were of no more avail than if they had been so much paper. In half an hour we were uncomfortably conscious that our only dry clothes were in the bag. As misfortunes never come singly, the luggage-carrier loosened and swung around to the left of the backbone. Every few minutes J—— was
down



down in the mud setting it straight again. The water poured in streams from our hats. With each turn of the wheels we were covered with mud.

It was in this condition we rode into the streets of Neuilly. Men and women came to their doors and laughed as we passed.---This decided us. There is nothing that chills sentiment as quickly as a drenching and ridicule. We went to the railway station, to learn there would be no train for three hours. It was simply out of the question to wait in our wet clothes for that length of time. That it never once occurred to us to stay in the town overnight shows how poorly we thought of it. Back we went through the streets, again greeted with the same heartless laughter from every side. If I were a prophet I would send an army of bears to devour the people of Neuilly.

The rain, the mud, and the luggage-carrier had it their own way the rest of the afternoon. When we could we rode as if for our lives.---But every now and again we had to stop, that J—— might unlace his boots, take them off, and let the water run out of them. Of course no one was abroad. What sane men would have dared such weather? We met but one small boy driving a big cart in a zig-zag course, particularly aggravating because we were just then on a down-grade. This was the last affront that made the rest unbearable. J—— is not a man patient of injuries.——

“ Million names of the name ! Little fly ! ” he yelled, and the boy let us pass.

—When a turn in the road brought us out on the banks of the Oise we were so wet that a plunge in its waters could not have made us wetter.---A grey town climbing

climbing up to a grey church rose on the opposite banks. We supposed it must be Beaumont. But indeed its name just then mattered little. Without stopping to identify it, we crossed the bridge and got down at the first inn we came to.



AN ENGLISH LANDLADY.

FORTUNATELY the town really was Beaumont, and the first inn, tolerably decent—so decent we wondered as to our reception. With due respect for the clean floors, we waited humbly at the threshold until the landlady appeared.—

“We are very wet,” said I in French, as if this was not a self-evident truth.

“Oh!” said she in unmistakable insular English. “Fancy!”

—Here was a stroke of good luck! A Frenchwoman would have measured our respectability by our looks; an Englishwoman could judge us by our love for sport. She sent a boy with
J—

J—— to put away the tricycle, and bade me follow her. Where we had stood were two pools of water. She took my gossamer; a muddy stream ran down the passage. I made a wet trail wherever I went. I followed the landlady up two flights of stairs into a well-furnished bedroom. I thought that now our troubles were at an end. But when J—— joined me I found there were two more to add to the list.---It seemed that just as he unstrapped the bag the luggage-carrier snapped at the top. And still worse, the constant swinging of the carrier had worked the bag partly open, and half its contents were well soaked. We managed to get together a few dry flannels, and then piled the rest of our wardrobe, from hats to shoes, outside the door—a melancholy monument to our misfortunes. The landlady, returning just then with two glasses
of

of hot brandy and water, promised to carry our clothes downstairs and have them dried at once.

So far, so good ; but what was to be done next ? To remain in our present thin attire meant certain colds, if nothing more serious. There was but one alternative, and we accepted it. When the landlady unceremoniously opened the door and saw us sitting up in the two little beds, solemnly staring at each other as we sipped the brandy and water, she was so embarrassed she forgot her English and broke out in French. It was fluent, but little else could be said for it. In a minute she was out of the room ; in another she was knocking discreetly, and telling us there were dressing-gowns and shawls and slippers without at our service. She was of the opinion that bed was no place for us, and would not hear of our staying

staying there. We must come into her private sitting-room, where there was a fire. As a rule private sitting-rooms and fires in September are not insignificant items in a bill. But she would hear of no excuse, and waited by the door until we dressed, after a fashion.

I flattered myself that I, in her neat wrapper with a little white ruffle in the neck, made quite a presentable appearance. J——'s costume, consisting of her husband's dressing-gown and a short kilt improvised out of a plaid-shawl, was more picturesque, but less successful.---It was still so wet without that we found comfort in the great wood fire in her room. She gave us easy-chairs, one on either side, and for our entertainment produced Thornbury's illustrated *London*. But we were more taken up in looking at each other, and
were

were reasonably serious only when she was in the room.

At half-past six she announced dinner, adding that our clothes were not yet dry, though a large fire had been kindled for their express benefit. I looked at J——. No, it was simply impossible to appear at the *table d'hôte* with him in his present costume. Before I had time to tell him so——

“You can't go down as you now are,” said he to me.

—The landlady was of the same mind, for a pretty little maid, coming in just then, laid the cloth on the table in the centre of the room. I thought of our bill the next morning. Private dining-rooms, like private sitting-rooms, are luxuries not to be had for nothing.

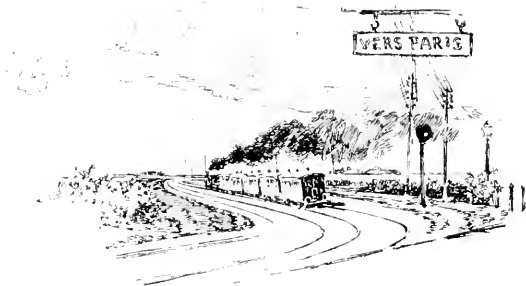
The dinner was good, and the little maid, be it said to her credit, behaved with great propriety. So long as she
was



was in attendance she never once smiled. However, I cannot answer for her gravity on the other side of the door.

It was half-past eight when the landlady said good-night, assuring us everything would be ready early in the morning.---But we went to bed at once. The last thing we heard before we fell asleep was the rain still pouring into the waters of the Oise and upon the paved streets of Beaumont.

OVER



OVER THE *PAVÉ*.

NEXT morning, because we were to go by train, we realised the advantage of travelling by tricycle. Early as we were, our clothes, dry and clean, were in readiness. When we appeared in them in the public dining-room the maid at first did not recognise us.---I think it is well worth recording that our bill amounted to just twelve francs and fifty centimes, though all the items, even to the fire that dried our entire wardrobe, were mentioned separately.---After breakfast J—— carried the luggage-carrier

carrier to a blacksmith within a few doors of the hotel. The latter examined it, found the trouble to be but trifling, and accordingly treated it as such, to our later discomfiture. The rain had stopped, though the clouds were still heavy. There was nothing to detain us save the provoking fact that the train would not start for an hour. It was at these times we best appreciated the independence of cycling.

This delay gave us a chance to see something of Beaumont, a town we found interesting chiefly because it was there we crossed the route of Mr. Stevenson's *Inland Voyage*. That whatever attractions it may possess do not appear on its surface, is shown by this book, since Mr. Stevenson, who on his way down the Oise must have paddled past, never even names Beaumont. Mr. Evelyn, who in the course of his travels

travels went through it, merely mentions it, while our sentimental Master ignores it altogether. It would therefore seem more in his spirit to say as little about it as possible.

—We left the train at St. Denis, had the tricycle lifted out—always a trouble at way stations—only to be told the *Ceinture* was three-quarters of a mile nearer Paris, and that we could not carry the machine on it, since baggage-cars were never attached to the trains. The porter suggested we could walk to the first *Ceinture* station, and take the train to the *Gare de Lyon*. He would put the velocipede on another train that would carry it to the *Gare du Nord*. We could on our arrival return to the *Gare du Nord* and ride the velocipede across the city. If *Monsieur* was pleased to do this he would charge himself with the machine. This ingenious suggestion

tion we dismissed with the contempt it deserved. Then he said there was nothing to do but to wait at St. Denis for the next train to Paris, due in an hour and a half.

I declare during that long wasted interval we did not as much as turn our heads on the side towards the Abbey. Richness of their treasury ! Stuff and nonsense ! Bating their jewels, which are all false, I would not give three sous for any one thing in it but Jaidas' lantern ; nor for that neither, only as it grows dark it might be of use. But on second thoughts I doubt if it would be much better than the lamp on the tri-cycle. Of course Mr. Tristram Shandy's words are recognised at once ? But then, why should I not use them if they set forth the sentiments that certainly would have been ours had we once remembered there was an Abbey at St. Denis ?

PARIS.

P A R I S.

CRACK, crack—crack, crack—crack, crack. So this is Paris! quoth we, continuing in the same mood, when, having at last reached the *Gare au Nord*, we went out on the street in search of a cab—So this is Paris!

The first, the finest, the most brilliant!

The cabmen at first would have nothing to do with us. Take that thing on their carriage indeed! Crack, crack—crack, crack—what a fuss they made! But at last, when chances of a fare grew less, they listened to our explanation that the cab was but for me and the bag.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven,
eight,

eight, nine, ten. Ten *cafés* within three minutes' driving! To see Paris from a cab, as you cross the city from one station to another, is to conclude that Parisians do nothing but drink coffee. As if he had read my thoughts, and would confirm me in this opinion, the driver set me down in front of the large *café* of the *Gare de Lyon*.

Inside the station I waited with the usual crowd;—with slouchy, red-trousered soldiers and baggy Zouaves, old *curés* and one brand-new *curé*, young ladies with high heels and old women in caps, young men in straight-brimmed tall hats, and *gendarmes* in full uniform. At the end of an hour J—— joined me. He looked very warm, his clothes were well bespattered with mud, and the lamp was sticking out of his coat pocket.---Though the streets of Paris are no longer villainously narrow, it is, I am sure, as difficult

as ever to turn a wheelbarrow in them, because of the recklessness of the drivers



and the vileness of the *pavé*. At all events it is no easy matter to wheel a tricycle through the broadest boulevards. Still J—— had much to be thankful for. He was run into but twice, and only the luggage-carrier and the lamp were broken.

We lunched in the *café*. Some of the high-heeled young ladies and high-hatted young gentlemen were lunching there at
the

the same time. They and the waiters stared at us too astonished to smile. It is true we, and more especially J——, had not the Parisian air. But stares were the only attentions we received. This made us glad we had decided not to stay several days in Paris in order to go on pilgrimage to Versailles. In the capital, apparently, knee-breeches were too conspicuous for comfort.---It was on business connected with his passport Mr. Sterne went to Versailles. We had no passport ; therefore it would be absurd to follow him thither. This was our argument. But it seemed as if the farther we rode on our journey the more certain we were to make sentimental plans but to break them.

No ; I cannot stop a moment to give you the character of the people—their genius, their manners, their customs, their laws, their religion, their govern-
ment,

ment, their manufactures, their commerce, their finances, with all the resources and hidden springs that sustain them—qualified as I may be by spending three hours amongst them, and during all that time making these things the entire subject of my inquiries and reflections.

Still,—still we must away—the roads were paved; we could not ride; the train went at 12.15; 'twas almost noon when we finished our lunch.

The notice inside the station announced the departure of the train at a quarter past twelve; but on the platform a porter, pointing to a second official placard that changed the hour to twelve, hurried the tricycle into the baggage-car, and us into the first second-class carriage we came to. It seemed that notices were set up at the *Gare de Lyon* for the confusion of travellers!

The

The carriage was empty save for a bag and one overcoat.

At the last moment—the train, in utter disregard of both notices, starting at five minutes after twelve—the owner of the bag jumped in. He gave us one glance, seized his property, and fairly fled.—I might have fancied we were not concerned in his flight had it not been for the sequel at Melun. Here at the station J——, with the bag, was out even before the train stopped. When I followed to the door the man was already on the platform. The moment I stepped out he stepped in, shut the door with a bang, and from the window watched our suspicious movements.—I wondered what he thought when he saw the tandem.

The porters and station-master immediately were for showing us the road to Barbizon. That the little village was
our

our destination they had no doubt. Did they not see *Monsieur's* portfolio?---They were mightily interested in the tricycle, and leaned over the railroad bridge above the road to watch it out of sight. But by shouting down useless parting directions, they made it seem as if they were there for our convenience rather than for their curiosity.---As for Melun, though it was of old a Roman town, and later was made famous by Abelard, I can say nothing of it, for the good reason that we at once turned our backs upon its *pavé*.



A TALK ABOUT M. MIL-
LET AND MR. STEVEN-
SON, AND FROM MR.
PENNELL.

THE ride from Melun to Barbizon and through the Forest of Fontainebleau was a pilgrimage within a pilgrimage. Like Christian, we were tempted to desert the straight course, and, like him, we yielded. We turned out of our sentimental way to see M. Millet's house for pleasure. --- To be strictly truthful, I must add that another good reason for going by Barbizon was the knowledge that the *parvé* of the national road

road only came to an end at Fontaine-bleau, together with our eagerness to be out of the train and riding again as soon as possible.---By following the Chailly and Barbizon road to the Forest we could have our desire and spare the tricycle.

It considerably cleared with the early afternoon, and the cloud masses, now white and soft, drifted apart, to leave blue spaces between.---We had a shower or two, but so light we were not wet; and presently the sun coming out set the rain-drops on the bushes and heather by the wayside to glittering.

Not far from Melun we met four bicyclers. Much has been said about the "freemasonry of the wheel." There is a pleasant suggestion of good-fellowship in the expression, but I think it merely means that cyclers, who abroad will speak to any other cyclist who gives them

them the chance, at home ignore all but friends and acquaintances. At least this is the definition which French, like English, riders practically accept.---Of the four near Melun, two wheeled by as if they did not see us, and the third tried not to smile. The fourth, however, wished us a *Bon jour*, but it was scarcely disinterested. It turned out he had just ordered a *Rotarie* from Bordeaux, and wanted to know something of the system of our tandem.---

In how many ways could it be used, for example? and what time could we make on it?

—The freemasonry in his case only carried him over level ground. At the foot of the first hill he left us.

We were in a humour for fault-finding. The luggage-carrier, of course, was to blame. Like Christian, we were punished for going out of our way, I suppose.

suppose. Certain it is that before long we stood still, as he did, and wotted not what to do.---If the blacksmith at Beaumont had been a little more serious in his work, the accident in Paris might not have happened; or indeed, to go back to the beginning of the evil, if Humber & Co. had only known as much as they think they know about their own business, we should not have found ourselves half-way to Chailly with the luggage-carrier hanging on by one screw.---We managed to keep it in place after a fashion; but there was no riding fast, and I do not believe in the whole course of our journey we ever sighted a town so joyously as we did Chailly, lying “dustily slumbering in the plain.”

In our struggles we had pulled off a strap, and I went to the harness-maker's to see if it could there be re-fastened, while J—— knocked at the
blacksmith's.

blacksmith's. For five minutes no one answered; and then at last an old woman, clean and neat as her village, opened the door, and made quite a show of briskness by asking what I wanted. She said of course the matter could be attended to. But when I represented I must have it done at once——

“My dear Madam, it is impossible,” she said. “The workmen have been gone two days, and I cannot tell when they will return.”

—At the blacksmith's J——'s knocks summoned only two children, who stared as if nothing was more unlooked for at the shop than a customer.---Our needs were urgent, and it was useless to attempt to make them understand. J—— went boldly in, and helped himself to wire and a nail.---While he was blacksmithing for himself their mother came out and bade him take whatever he wanted.

wanted. The workmen had been away a week, and she did not know when they would be back again.---That workmen should leave Chailly to find something to do did not seem surprising. The only wonder was they should think it worth their while to stay there at all.---As we stood in front of the shop, J—— mending the luggage-carrier with an energy I am sure had never gone to the operation before, a little diligence carrying a young lady and an artist in Tam o' Shanter—there was no mistaking his trade—passed with a great jingling of bells. But even it failed to awake Chailly from its slumbers.

The blacksmith's wife refused to take any money for the wire and nail.---However, J—— insisting on making some payment, the woman told him he could give sous to the children. I have never seen anything to equal her honesty.

When

When she found that two of her neighbour's little girls had come in for a share of the profits, she forced them to relinquish it, while she would not allow her own children to keep more than two sous a-piece. Nothing we could say could alter her resolution, and with Spartan-like heroism she seized the extra sous and thrust them into J——'s hand.

After experiencing these things, we rode out on the great plain of Barbizon. It would be affectation to pretend we



did not at once think and speak of Millet. Was it not partly to see his house and country we had come this way? His fields, with here and there scattered grey boulders, and in the middle distance a cluster of trees, stretched

stretched from either side of the road to the far low horizon, the beauty of their monotony being but accentuated by the afternoon's soft cloud-shadows. It seemed to us a bright, broad prospect, though I suppose we should have found it full of infinite sadness.---There was not much pathos in near cabbage-



patches glowing and shining in two o'clock sunlight, and we could not believe the weariness of the peasants to be quite genuine. Their melancholy seemed less hopelessness, than consciousness of their duty to pose as pathetic features in the landscape.---Even an old
woman,

woman, a real Millet, with sabots and handkerchief turban, and a bundle of grass on her back, stopped on her homeward way to strike a weary attitude on a stone heap by the wayside the minute she saw J——'s sketch-book.--- The peasants of Barbizon have not served an apprenticeship as models for nothing. They have learned to realise their sufferings, and to make the most of them.---



“Now I know,” said J——, putting up his sketch-book, “if I were to tell her to put her arms or her legs or head in another position, she would say, ‘*Mais non, Monsieur*, it was thus I posed for *Monsieur Millet*,’ or *Monsieur* somebody else. Bah! it’s all a fashion!”

—The old woman, disappointed, got up and walked onwards, to be speedily out-distanced by us.

But

But J——, as is his habit when he once “gets going,” went on.—

“How’s a picture painted here now-a-days any way? Nothing could be simpler. First you get your model;—she’s most probably stood for hundreds of other men, and knows more about the business than you do yourself; your master tells you how to pose her; you put her in a cabbage-patch or kitchen prepared for the purpose, like those in Chailly, for example; paint the background as carefully as you know how, and your picture’s made. It’s easier to learn how to paint than to find motives for yourself; so follow as closely as possible in other men’s steps; choose the simplest subjects you can; above all, be in the fashion. There are as good subjects at home as in Barbizon for Americans who would but go and look for them.”

—By this time, fortunately, we were
in

in Barbizon, and the necessity of evolving a French sentence with which to ask his way brought J——'s lecture to an end.---There could be no doubt that the village was the headquarters for artists. Here and there and everywhere, among the low grey gabled houses, were studios; and scarcely were we in the village street before we found an exhibition of pictures.---It has been recorded that already Barbizon's artistic popularity is waning, and that even its secondary lights have deserted it. We were convinced of its decline when we saw that several of the studios were for rent, and confirmed in this conviction by a visit to the Exhibition. It was a shade worse than a Royal Academy, and at a first glance appeared to be a collection of fireworks. On a close examination the fireworks resolved themselves into green trees sprawling against

L patches

patches of vivid blue sky, and flaming yellow flowers growing in rank luxuriance in low-toned plains.---There were one or two Millets, of course ; but what would Millet himself have said to them ? It is only fair to add that a few small unpretending canvases were not without merit.

From what we saw in Barbizon, I do not think it improbable that in another generation there will not be an artist in the village, and that Millet will have been forgotten by the villagers.---Though his family still live there, the children of the place seem to know nothing of his greatness. The first boys of whom we asked the way to the house, pointed vaguely down the long winding street, and thought, but were not quite sure, we should find it if we kept straight on. After we left the Exhibition, other boys whom we questioned declared they had
never

never heard the name of Millet; and when we refused to let them off so easily, told us we must go back in the very direction from which we had come. No, we insisted, it was not there.—

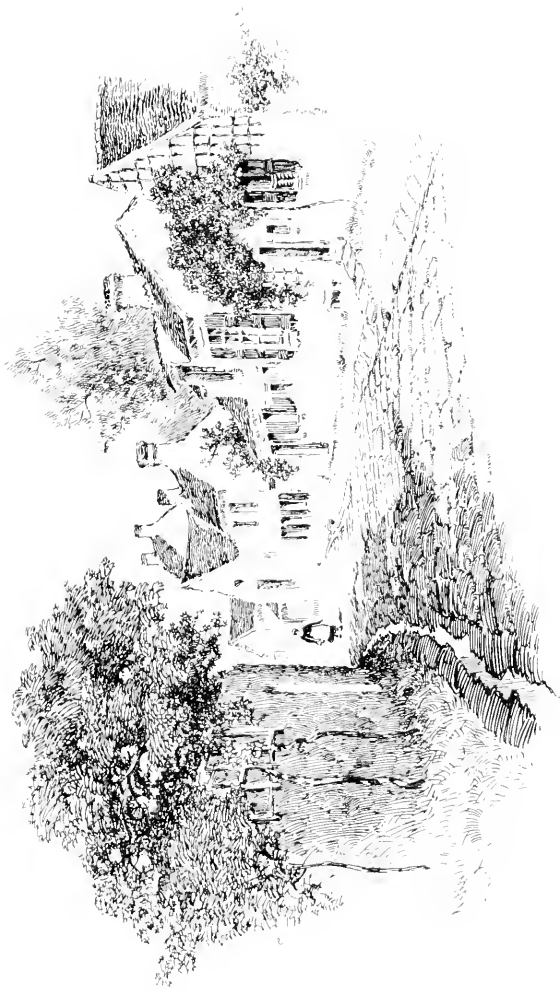
“Ah!” they thought, “*Monsieur* must mean *Monsieur Millet le charbonnier*.”

—Such is fame at home!

Finally, after many explanations on our part, and conversation with unseen elders behind a garden wall on theirs, a man near by explained just where the *Maison Millet* was.

A few steps farther on we reached it. As, I suppose, many other pilgrims have done, we sat a while on the shady stone seat opposite. A rather abrupt turn just there hid the road as it wound towards the forest. But we could look back some distance down the long village street at the low houses and high garden

den walls.---The famous *Maison Millet*, built right on the road, grey, with brown moss-grown roof, did not differ from the other peasant cottages. Even the one large window, extending almost the entire height of the house, was scarcely a mark of distinction in studio-crowded Barbizon ; just as, probably, during Millet's lifetime, his poverty and troubles, and failure to make both ends meet, were matters of course among the hard-working villagers.---And yet this humble cottage is already better known and honoured as a place of pilgrimage in the artistic world, than the palaces that crown Campden Hill and cluster around Palace Gate, Kensington ; even as the works that came from it will be remembered when the pictures painted within the palace-studios have long since been forgotten.---We did not ask to go into the house. I believe visitors are admitted ;



admitted ; but it seems almost cruel to treat it as a mere museum for curious tourists, while the Millet family is still in charge. So we rested in the pleasant shade, looking over to the unassuming grey cottage where one or two plaster-casts showed through the window, the branches of a tall tree waved over the chimney, and an elder-bush, beneath the weight of its berries, bent far over the garden wall, on the other side of which Millet so often walked and stood to watch the west and the setting sun.---No one was to be seen but two or three children, who examined the tricycle as they talked in whispers. But we could hear near voices and the clatter of dishes. And then the wind would come in great gusts from over the forest, shaking down the leaves on its way, and drowning all other noises.

We felt the great contrast when we
went

went from the little house where life was always sad, to Siron's, "that excellent artist's barrack, managed upon easy principles."---Its cheerfulness was proclaimed by its large sign representing a jolly



landlord holding a pig's head on a dish, while a young lady and gentleman, apparently in an ecstasy of content at the prospect of a good meal, lay prostrate before

before it, one on either side, and an appreciative dog sniffed at it from the foreground.---It seemed more eloquent in its way than the sign before the other village inn, whereon a young lady sat at her easel, and two or three young men peeped over her shoulder, and he who painted it for his dinner was no poor artist in one sense of the word.

Often enough at Siron's, as at the *Maison Millet*, there has been the difficulty of making both ends meet. But at the inn it has been turned into comedy rather than tragedy, and if money has not been forthcoming at once, Siron has been willing to wait, knowing that it would in the end.---Men of other professions, if they lived together in communities, as artists often do, could hardly show so fair a record. For all the talk and definitions of so-called Bohemianism, an artist is never
in

in debt longer than he can help.---It would be fortunate for tradespeople if the same could be said of all men.

A waiter in a dress-coat, which was certainly not what we had come to Barbizon to see, showed us into the "high inn-chamber panelled" with sketches, where we took great pleasure in noting that the best were by Americans.---We next ordered *grosaille*, for which it was our privilege to pay double the price asked elsewhere. I hope the charges for artists living in Barbizon are not the same as those for an artist passing through, disguised as a tricycler.---But Siron's, with its elegant waiter and prices, and its Exhibition open to the public, was not the Siron's we had expected. We had thought to find a true artists' inn, like certain Venetian and Florentine dens we knew of;—we had come instead to a show for the tourist.---And indeed all
Barbizon,

Barbizon, with its picture galleries and studios to let, and posing peasants, seemed no better than a convenient stopping-place, to which drivers from Fontainebleau could bring travellers, and allow them to spend their francs for the benefit of Barbizonians.---Thus, from Millet's misery the people have reaped a golden harvest.

Stranger still is the fact, that the country where Millet could see but suffering humanity, with a forest or open landscape in harmony with it, is now recommended as a place in which to learn mirth and vivacious contentment.---Millet's portion in Barbizon was headache and heartache, so that now and then, in his despair, he cried out to his friends that physically and morally he was going down hill. Over the way at Siron's other men stayed on in the village, because near the forest they were
 sure

sure of physical and moral good health, air, light, perfumes, and the shapes of things concurring for them in happy harmony.——

“ There is no place,” says Mr. Stevenson, “ where the young are more gladly conscious of their youth, or the old better contented with their age.”

IN THE FOREST.

THE waiter having overcharged us for the *groscille*, we thought it only fair he should give us information for nothing. He told us the forest was just around the corner, which we could see for ourselves, and he directed us on our way with such care that we forgot his directions the next minute.

The forest is still "horrid and solitary," as Evelyn has it, just as when he rode through it and between its "hideous rocks." We do not know to this day in what part we were, nor what roads we followed. We made no effort to go out of our direct course in search of the placarded places which it is the tourist's duty

duty to visit.---We did think something of looking for the rock with the plaques set up on it, in memory of Millet and Rousseau. In telling us how to find it the waiter's words had been many and explicit. But when we tried to recall them we could not ; nor were we more successful in our endeavours to find the rock for ourselves. However, I do not think it mattered much. It was enough to know the way was beautiful and the road good.---No such perfect afternoon had come to us since our departure from Calais ; and one reason of its perfection was, that our pleasure in the loveliness of the place was so great, we cared little or not at all for names and famous sights. If we return at some future day to Fontainebleau, we shall probably explore its valleys and rocks, its groves and thickets. But even were we never to go back, we should not wish that
one

one ride to have been in any way different.

We rode for miles, and yet the only monotony was in the good road. Now, we passed great rocks, some grey and riven, moss and lichens clinging to them,



and bushes and trees struggling from their crevices and growing on their summit; others bare and shadeless. Here, stretching

stretching from boulder to boulder, were deep beds of purple heather paled by the sun—the heather on which Millet used to love to lie and look up to the clouds and the blue sky ; and there, feathered ferns, yellow and autumnal in the open spaces, green and fresh in the shade of rocks and trees, “made a luxurious couch more soft than sleep.”---Now the way went through the very heart of a pine wood ; pine needles instead of heather covered the ground, and even carpeted the road ; a spicy fragrance, sweetest of all sweet forest scents, perfumed the air ; the wind sighed softly through the topmost branches, and the tricycle wheeled without a sound over the brown carpet, on which shadows fell and the sun shone.

Then the pine scent changed to a rich earthy smell, and to the right the pines gave way to beeches, tall and slim, growing

ing

ing in groups of two or three together,
with here and there grassy glades lead-



ing to dense thickets ; on the left a close
M undergrowth

undergrowth, high enough to shut out the prospect, made a hedge-like border to the road. And then again, on either hand old moss-grown trees rose to a venerable height, their branches meeting overhead.

There is something in a forest, as in a cathedral, that makes one quiet. We rode for miles in silence. Then at last, in the green aisle, enthusiasm breaking all bounds——

“ This is immense ! ” cried J——.

—And so indeed it was, in more than the American sense.

But even the vast Forest of Fontainebleau cannot go on for ever.---We were not a little sorry when we wheeled out into an open space at the top of a long hill, where children were chattering and playing and two nuns were sitting on the grass. But we were sorrier when, at the beginning of the coast, the brake
went

went all wrong and refused to work. The hill was steep. All we could do was to run into a bank by the road, when the machine stopped.



FONTAINEBLEAU

F O N T A I N E B L E A U.

ALL you need say of Fontainebleau (in case you are asked) is, that it stands about forty miles (south something) from Paris, in the middle of a large forest, and that there is something great in it.

Before we went to sleep that night we took counsel together, and it came to nought. For we determined to be up in the morning with the sun, and to devote the day to the forest. Of course we overslept ourselves. The sun had been up three or four hours when we awoke, though as yet it had refused to show itself. A light cold drizzle was falling.—

“We’ll

“We’ll go instead,” said J——, over his coffee, “to the Palace.”

“I’ll go see any Palace,” quoth I, for I was all compliance through every step of the journey.

We had not a guide-book with us. We could not tell which was the Gallery of Francis I., which the Court of Diane de Poitiers, which the Court *des Adieux*. But had we stopped to turn over the pages of a Baedeker, I believe we should have lost our impression of the princely scale with which kings in the good old times provided for their pleasures.—Court opened into court, one as desolate and deserted as another; pavilion succeeded pavilion; and the grey walls, with their red brick facings and *proud* roofs, as Ruskin would call them, seemed never ending. There is nothing that describes this great pile as well as the saying of an Englishman, that

Fontainebleau

Fontainebleau is a *rendez-vous* of châteaux.

When we walked in the garden, and saw that the sun was beginning to shine, and that it was a quarter of eleven by the clock in the clock-tower——

“We had better be off,” said we.

As we passed the walls of the Palace gardens the clock struck the hour. It was not too late. We could still go in, listen to the guide, and be prepared now to take up above fifty pages with his words and our reflections upon them.

But, courage, gentle reader ; in the words of our Master, 'tis enough to have thee in our power ! but to make use of the advantage, which the fortune of the pen has now gained over thee, would be too much.

So, put on, my brave travellers, and make the best of your way to Nemours.

THROUGH



THROUGH A FAIR COUNTRY.

TO Nemours all the way was pleasantness, and all the path was peace. There was nothing to note but the beauty and excellence of the road. Only once we came to *pavé*. Then, however, as it was at the bottom of a hill, it was like to be our ruin. Rosin, backpedalling, and clever steering to the side-path saved us. A couple of tramps asked if we had not an extra seat to spare.

As for Nemours, we could go on for ever in its praise, we found it so pretty ; but for its inhabitants, the less, I think, we say of them the better.---At three

café

café restaurants—one we passed just as we went into the city, two were in its very heart—food was refused to us. There was no reason given for this refusal. The people were disagreeable, that was all.---We lunched in true tramp fashion, on whatever we could pick up by the way. At one end of the town we ate pears, at the other cake. If our meal was scanty, we at least had all out of doors instead of a close *café* for dining-room.

We rode a little distance by the canal,



and then went into the town to come
quite

quite unexpectedly upon its castle, which, with its grim grey walls and turrets, was the first real castle we had seen in all our journey. But old carts and lumber lay familiarly in its courtyard, as if to remind the chance visitor of its useless old age.--- We liked it better from the other side of the river, where all belittling details were lost, and we saw the grey pile sternly outlined against the sky and softly reflected in the water.

Beyond Nemours the same fine road, like a park avenue, went with the pop-



lared river until the latter ran off with a great curve across the broad green fields, to keep well out of sight until it turned

turned back to meet us at Fontenoy. Here were two canoeists.---The sun shone on the water, but failed in soft



shadows on the meadows beyond and on the road. Everything was still and at rest but the river and ourselves.

But, quiet as the country was, there was nothing to remind us it was Sunday. Peasants were at work. Old women here and there cut grass by the wayside, or carried it home in large bundles

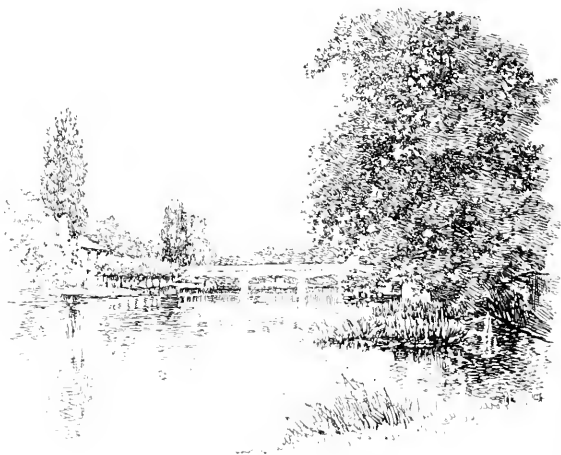
bundles on their backs. In one place *cantonniers* were busy covering the road



with broken stones. In another we passed travellers footing it over the white highway ; one who walked bare-foot, with his boots and his umbrella strapped to his back, was singing as he went.---Only once we heard church bells. In the little grey stone villages, at whose entrance poplars stood for sentinels, there were more people about than usual. And at Souppes, where we stopped for coffee, the *café* was full of men in blouses, playing cards and drinking beer.

In

In the course of the afternoon we left the department of the Seine-et-Loire for the Loiret, where the road, though not bad, was not quite so good, and where the kilometre-stones no longer marked



the distance, but were newly white-ened, looking for all the world, as J—— suggested, like tombstones of dead kilometres.---Then we came to the
first

first vineyard on our route, in which the vines, heavy with purple clusters, clung to low poles, with none of the grace of the same vines crossing from mulberry to mulberry in Italy, or of the hops in England.---Up and down the road took us—now giving us a glimpse of an old farm-house on a hillside, and then of a far château half hidden in the trees, until we began to meet many carriages.---A few minutes after these signs of city life appeared, we were in Montargis.

MONTARGIS

MONTARGIS.

THE landlady was full of apologies for the dulness of the town. The band always played on Sunday afternoons on the *Place* in front of her house, she said ; but now the troops were away for the autumn manœuvres, and Montargis was sad in their absence. We thought, however, she might better have apologised for the lateness of her dinner-hour.---But it was, after all, fortunate, for it so chanced we saw more of Montargis than we expected.

Though little is said about it in guide and other books, it is one of the prettiest towns in all France. A river, an old church, and a mediæval castle are always

ways elements of picturesqueness, and these Montargis has used to the very best advantage.---We found the church grey and weather-worn of course.



The castle, closed about with high walls, stood gloomily apart, and over-looked

looked the town. A narrow hilly street, lined with little houses, led to its heavy gateway, against and above which leaned the poor and shabby roofs of the nearest dwellings.

But we took greatest pleasure in the river, which wandered around and through the town, as if bent on seeing as much of city life as possible ;—now flowing between stone embankments, from which men and boys for ever fished and caught nothing, while the castle frowned down upon it ; now, tired already of city ways and sights, running peacefully between green banks and trees whose branches met above ; again, crossing the street and making its way by old ruinous houses. We stood on a near bridge while a funeral passed. Two men carried a coffin, adorned with one poor wreath, and so small we knew the body of a child lay within ; for mourners
there



there were half a dozen women in white caps. The very simplicity of the little procession made it the more solemn. At its approach voices were hushed and hats lifted. And yet, as they went over the bridge, the acolytes and the chanters, even the priest himself, stole a momentary inquiring glance at J——'s stockings.

It was in Montargis the English drowned Joan of Arc. My authority is an eminently respectable stationer on the right-hand side of the principal street as you enter the town from the north. He assured us of the truth of his statement; and as he had always lived in Montargis and we were strangers, we did not see our way to dispute it.

In Montargis we heard for the first time the story of the lady tricycler, afterwards repeated at almost every stage of our journey. The landlady served it to
us

us with the dessert.---Only a few days before, it seemed, two gentlemen arrived, each riding a velocipede, and each wearing long stockings and short pantaloons, like *Monsieur*.——

Show these gentlemen to No. 14, she said to the chamber-maid. Take these towels up to *ces messieurs* in No. 14, she said to the same chamber-maid a few minutes later. When the dinner-bell rang there came down from No. 14, not two gentlemen, but a gentleman and a lady; and, if we would believe it, the lady had on a black silk dress. And the next morning, my faith, two gentlemen rode away!

—In the *café*, after dinner, we watched four citizens of Montargis gamble recklessly at corks. One, an old fat man in a blouse, who stood on one leg and waved the other in the air when he played, ran great risks with his sous,
and

and usually won, to the discomfiture of a small man who hit feebly and lost steadily.——

“It is that you are wanting in courage, my child,” his successful rival kept telling him.

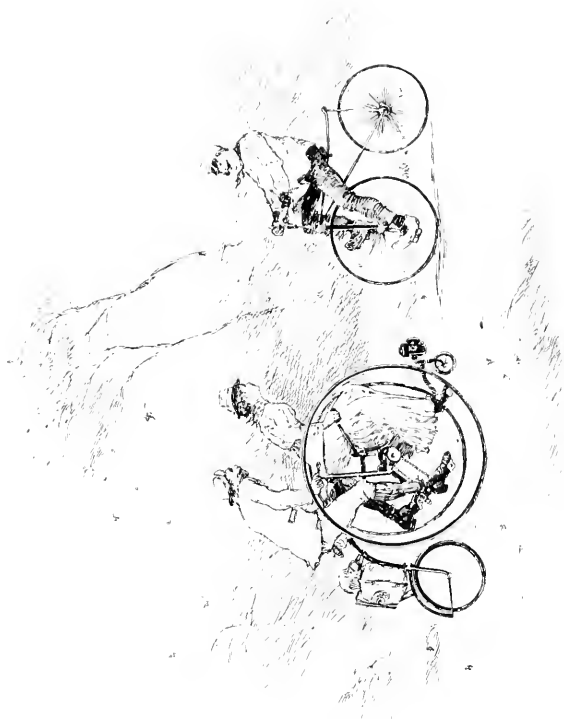
—The few soldiers left in Montargis were making the rounds of the town with great blowing of bugle and beating of drum when we went to our room in the Hôtel de la Poste.

How

HOW WE FOUGHT THE WIND
FROM MONTARGIS TO COSNE.

FROM Montargis to Cosne we fought a mighty wind. The greater part of the day our heads were down, and we were working as one never works except for pleasure.---Under these circumstances we saw little of the country through which we passed. We were just conscious of the tramps we had seen the day before, now resting by the roadside ; and of a blue blouse on an old boneshaker flying triumphantly with the wind down a long hill up which we were painfully toiling.

The long day was marked only by our halts for rest. At the first town,
but



but ten kilometres from Montargis, we stopped nominally for syrup, but really to take breath. As we drank the *gros-cille*, which was bad, the proprietress of the *café* told us what we should have seen in Montargis.——

Bah! the château, that was nothing. But hold! the brand-new caoutchouc factory; there was something.

—An hour later we dismounted again, to pick blackberries from the hedge. And then we went doggedly on, pedalling away until we reached the next village, many kilometres beyond. There was just outside a pretty, shady road, which we remember gratefully, since on it we had our first bit of easy riding. Adjoining was a château with high walls, over which came the sound of gay music.——

To whom did it belong? we asked an old woman on the road.

“ To

“To a *Monsieur* who is enormously rich,” she said. “*Mais, tout le même*”—“But, all the same”—“he is *bourgeois*!”

The village was just beyond, and in its inn we had lunch.---While we were eating bang went a drum on the street, and a bell began to ring. It was a pedler, who had drawn up his cart. When we strolled out to the street he had collected quite a crowd.

“Look at these,” he was saying, as he showed a package of flannels; “in the town the price is three francs. I ask thirty-five sous. I pray you, ladies, do me the favour to feel them. Are they not soft? But this is the last package I have. And now, all those who want a pair, hold up their hands.”

—There was a scramble; more hands than could be filled were raised; his assistant took down the names of the buyers

buyers, and then—the pedler produced just such another package from his cart.—

“*Nom de Dieu ! what longness !*” he cried, as he held up a specimen in front of the nearest woman.

—At this every one laughed.—

“But, my children” — *mes enfants*, that is what he called them—“we are not here to amuse ourselves.”

—And so the sale went on. Every article exhibited was the last of the kind until it was sold. He knew them in this country here, this prince of pedlers told them. They did not like to buy dear.—When we turned away he had just sold a piece of corduroy—town price, twelve francs ; pedler’s price, five francs fifty — to an old man who went off grinning, his prize under his arms.

—The villagers were all talking together,

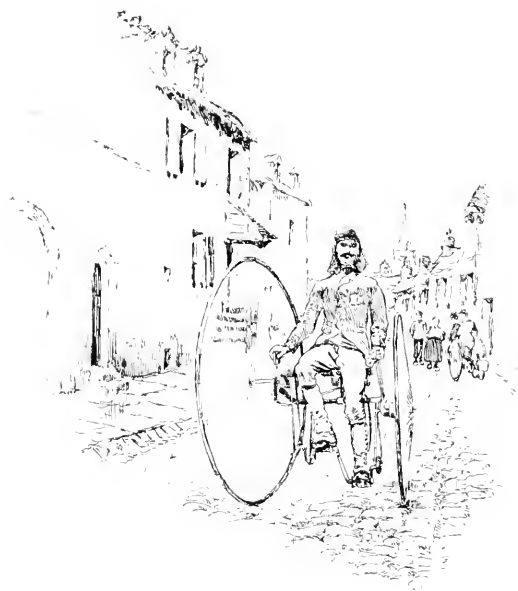
gether, but above their voices we heard that of the pedler, loud and reproachful.—

“ *Que vous êtes bavards ici !* ”

—Reluctantly we returned to work. The wind was in no friendlier mood, and we rode, as in the morning, with heads down and thoughts fixed upon the pedals.—At Briare—you may despatch it in a word : ’tis an uninteresting town ! —we had our first view of the Loire. For the rest of the day the river was always on our right ; sometimes far off, and only indicated by its rows of tall trees ; sometimes near, a line of grey or silver, as the wind drove the clouds above or beyond it.—We met the *Café of the Sun*, travelling on wheels.

We were some little time in Bonny. Every one came out to watch J——, as he opened his sketch-book, and in a minute we were surrounded.

“ Is



“ Is *Monsieur* making plans for houses ? ” asked one old woman.

—But the event of the day was in Neuvy. There we found a great crowd in the narrow street, and in the midst stood a tricycle. A Frenchman in flannel shirt, grey linen, and gaiters, with a handkerchief hanging from his hat over his neck, at once made his way through the crowd and came towards us.---At last we were to have a proof of the freemasonry of the wheel. But he introduced himself with a circular, and was friendly in the interests of the manufacturers for whom he travelled. He did not think much of the “Humber;” its wheels were so small. He knew all the English makes, because he had an English brother-in-law who lived in Portsmouth. Look at his machine, now; it had a wheel of a pretty height. We must try it, as he was sure we should

should once we read the circular, and give up the "Humber."

Our tandem, with its symmetrical parts and modest coat of varnish well covered with mud, was indeed insignificant compared with the nickel-plated glory of his three wheels, no two of which were of the same size, the largest being as tall as a bicycle.* At all events the people of Neuvy, most of whom were armed with circulars, thought so. They looked at us, because a meeting of tricyclers was not an everyday occurrence in their town, but we gathered no crowd of admirers.—

"How many kilometres do you make in a day?" asked the Frenchman.

J—— said that we had left Montargis, and were going on to Cosne—seventy kilometres in all.

* For the cyclist it suffices to say that it was an overgrown "Bayliss & Thomas."

"Seventy

“Seventy kilometres! It is too much for *Madame*,” said the Frenchman, with a bow.

—In my heart I was of the same opinion. But I declared the ride to be a mere nothing, and almost apologised for not making it longer.

He rejoiced in the exercise, he declared with enthusiasm. It was a little fatiguing sometimes, but what would you have? And it seemed that his love for the sport occasionally carried him to the excess of thirty kilometres in a day. At La Charité, between Cosne and Moulins, he had met two Englishmen who were riding safety bicycles with an interpreter. We asked him if he had ever ridden in England. He said No; French roads were so good, and French country so beautiful.—

“Ah, *Madame*”—with his hand on his heart of course—“I adore the France!”

o

—Then

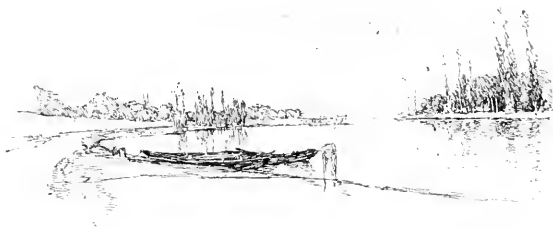
—Then we shook hands, to the visible delight of the lookers-on, and, with another bow, he told us we had nothing but great beauty from Neuvy to Cosne, a distance of fifteen kilometres.---The whole town watched our start, and, I think, in our shabbiness we must have served the agent's purpose even better than his circular.

As we wheeled on we saw his tracks, making a zig-zag course along the road, with little credit to his steering. And in front of a lonely farm-house a small boy at our coming drew a long sigh.——

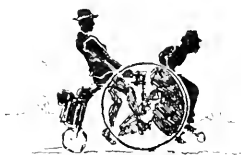
“But here is another!” he called to some one indoors.

—The country really was beautiful. But I was so tired! Every turn of the pedals I felt must be the last. And the thought that we should reach Cosne but to begin the same battle on the morrow, did not help to keep up my spirits. In
vain

vain I tried to be sentimental. For the hundredth time I admitted to myself



that sentiment might do for a post-chaise, but was impossible on a tricycle. ---And all the time J—— kept telling me that if I did not do my share of the work I should kill him. Certainly seventy kilometres against the wind were too much for *Madame*.



A GOOD SAMARITAN.

A LONG, ugly, stupid street leads to the principal *Place* of Cosne. Its *pacé* is surely the vilest to be found in all the length and breadth of France.---When we came into the town it was full of slouchy, disorderly soldiers. We pushed the tricycle to the Hôtel d'Etoile, which the commercial gentlemen of St. Just had praised. We should forget the miseries of the day over a good dinner. ---The landlady came to the door and looked at us. She had no room, she declared, and could do nothing for us. Her house was full of officers and *gentlemen*. J—— asked what other hotel she would recommend.

She

She pointed to an *auberge* across the street. It was small and mean, with soldiers standing in the doorway and at the windows. She could not in words have said more plainly what she thought of us.——

Was there a *table d'hôte* over there?

She did not know, with an indifferent shrug of her shoulders.

If we could not sleep in the Etoile, could we eat in it?

“No, that is altogether impossible,” and she turned her back upon us and went into the house.

—I could have cried in my disappointment.

The landlady of the Grand Cerf received us with smiles.——

Had we both travelled on that one little velocipede?

—But J—— was in no humour for compliments.——

Could

Could she give us a room?

There was not one in the house, she said; these autumn manœuvres had brought so many people to town. She had just that moment given up hers to two gentlemen who had telegraphed that they would arrive by a late train, and she and her daughter must spend the night in a friend's house.

—She must have seen the despair in our eyes, for, before we had time to speak, she added, that she would send to a neighbour's to see what could be done for us there.

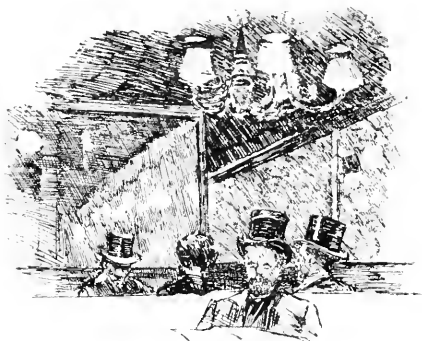
Her messenger, however, came back to say there was not one room to spare. But suddenly, with a happy inspiration, the landlady bade us come in, and suggested that if we were willing to wait, and would be satisfied with makeshifts, she could put up two beds in a small dining-room so soon as dinner was over.

---Makeshifts

---Makeshifts indeed ! She was offering luxuries.——

In the meantime, since the two gentlemen had not arrived, we could use her room to prepare for dinner.

—Though the Grand Cerf was not the commercial house of Cosne, it was that night full of commercial gentlemen,



ready for friendly talk. After dinner in its *café* J—— asked the waiter what there was in the town ?——

“ *Mais,*

“*Mais, Monsieur*, there are many officers and soldiers.”

That was not what he meant, J—— explained. Was there a castle or a fine church, for example?

—At this point the commercial gentlemen at the nearest table made bold to interfere. There was nothing in Cosne, they said, and were for sending us off on a castle hunt to Touraine at once. They had the map out in a trice, and during the next few minutes sent us flying from one end of it to the other.—

They will give us no rest, thought I.

—But presently one of the company asked how we liked Paris compared to London?——

“London is a great town, is it not?” said he, looking to us for support, so that we could do no less than agree with him. “But then, if you want coffee or something else to drink on the
Sunday,

Sunday, what is to be done? Syrups are sold in the pharmacy, and the pharmacy is closed. The beer-houses are shut till one, and even after that hour, you go in, you are asked what you will have, the beer or the brandy is poured out, you drink it, and then you go at once. It is always like this, every day. You drink and you go."

"But that it is *bizarre!*" said a young man opposite, who had never been in England.

"I think well that it is *bizarre!*" continued the other; "but you do not know what it is to live there in a family hotel. No shops are open the Sunday, and the landlady must buy everything the Saturday. What does she do? She buys a piece of *rosbif*. She gives it to you hot the Saturday, and cold for breakfast, dinner, and supper the Sunday; and the butcher, he never brings
fresh

fresh meat the Monday, and you eat your *rosbif* cold again for dinner. And then you have a gooseberry tart. *My God*, how it sticks to your teeth ! It is like this one eats in England."

"It is not astonishing," thought a serious, elderly gentleman on his right, "that the rich English come to France to dine."

—At an early hour we went to the room which the landlady promised should be ours once dinner was well over.---The beds were not yet made, though mattresses and bedclothes were piled in one corner. The landlord and a lady and gentleman we had seen at the *table d'hôte* sat by a table. They invited us politely to be seated.——

"I should like to go to bed," said I, in the language of our country.

"We cannot send them away," said J——.

—And

—And so, making the best of the matter, we sat down with them, and talked about travelling and Italy and snoring and velocipedes and Mount Vesuvius, and, I think, of some other things which I have forgotten.---*Monsieur* and *Madame*, who had voyaged much, also urged a journey to Touraine to see the castles.——

“Bother the castles,” thought I to myself.

“Hang ’em,” said J—— audibly, but in American.

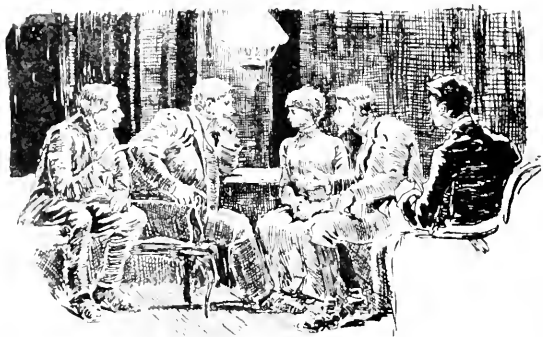
—But the landlady, just then coming in, asked if we should like to see our room.——

“It is here,” said we.

“It is on the other side of the hall,” said the landlady, and she led the way without more ado. “See the two little iron beds,” she cried on the threshold, “and the tiny toilet table! ’Tis like a
prison

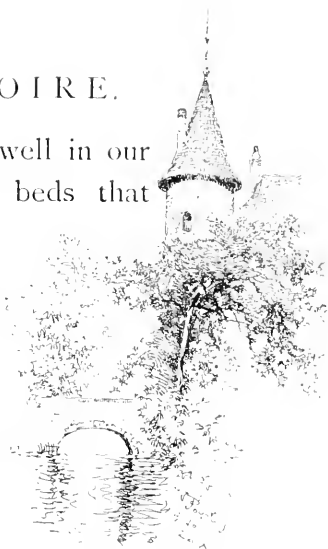
prison cell ;" and nothing would please her but she must bring *Monsieur* and *Madame* and her husband and daughter to look.

—In the morning, in her bill, however, it was no longer a prison cell, but a best bedchamber. But if a Good Samaritan does overcharge you, what can you do ?



BY THE LOIRE.

WE rested so well in our little iron beds that in the morning we took a long walk through Cosne before we went back to work. We found it chiefly remarkable for its high sweeping roofs and striking weather-vanes.



The ride from Cosne was very much like that from Montargis, only fortunately there was less wind, and the wide poplared Loire was on our left from our start. Between us and it, however, were the pleasant fields and meadows through which Mr. Evelyn, with Mr. Waller and some other ingenious persons, footed it,
and

and shot at birds and other fowls, or else sang and composed verses during their



voyage up the river.---Though we never dropped into poetry or song, with us, as with them, nothing came amiss. Everything was a pleasure, from the clouds chasing each other lazily above the Loire and occasionally uncovering the sun, showing us how hot the day might be, to the old women and little girls in blue skirts and sabots, each watching one cow or a couple of white turkeys or geese, whom we met at intervals all day long ;



long ; from the seemingly endless kilometres of level white road between pop-



lars to the too short down-grade between vineyards into Pouilly. The only incident throughout the morning was the discovery of two men stealing grapes from a vineyard. We took them to be its owners, and would have offered to buy their fruit had they not at once looked to us for sympathy with a friendly smile that

P

showed

showed they had no right to be there.
---It was just after Pouilly, we passed



a little solitary inn that facetiously announced on its sign : “ To-day one pays money ; to-morrow, nothing.”

At noon we climbed into La Charité, though I think we might have been spared the climb had we followed the road on the river-bank. As it was, we entered the town at the upper end, under its old gateway, topped with grey stone figures, and had a good view of its massive walls and fortifications. Within the ramparts we found a winding street
descending

descending precipitately towards the Loire, a church in ruins. and people



with absolutely nothing to do. As if glad of an occupation, they gathered around the tricycle and examined it with their eyes and hands ; and while a waiter in a *café* bestirred himself to overcharge us, and a man in a cake-shop, with unlooked-for energy, sold us his stalest cakes, they even went so far as to roll it up and down to test the tyres.---Nor was this curious idle crowd to be got rid of so long as we were in La Charité, and our stay there was not short ; for as we followed the wind-
ings

ings of the street, just as it widened into a *Place* before turning to take a

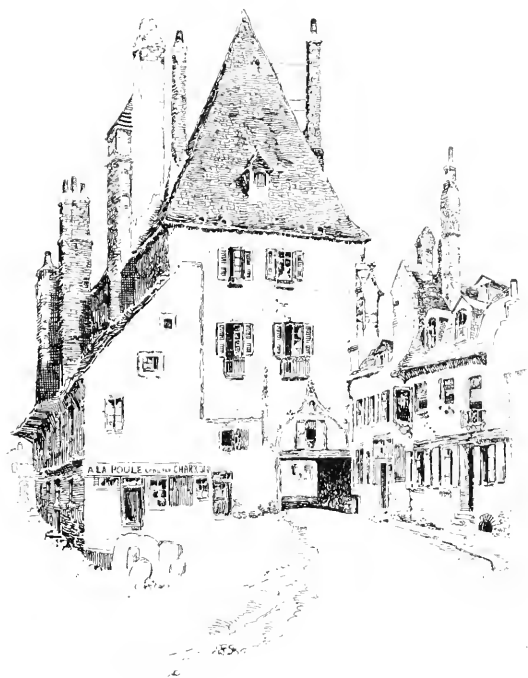


straight course towards the river, we came out upon the old church doorway, its countless niches empty, or filled with
headless

headless statues. Grass-grown steps led up to it, and one tall tower, with carven decorations half effaced, but rows of low arcades uninjured, rose at its side from the top of a small house; on its lowest arch was a staring announcement of *Le Petit Journal*. But of church walls, or of door to open or close, there was no sign. The arched entrance gave admittance into a large court. We stopped at the opposite corner, and J—— had his sketch-book out in a minute, to the evident satisfaction of the people. But a woman from a near *café*, as idle but more friendly than the rest, came over to say it was a pity *Monsieur* could not get a photograph of the ruin; a photograph was so much prettier than a drawing. J—— jumped at this sensible suggestion, and she sent him to a notary on the fourth floor of a house in a back street. But this gentleman was out; and

and as the photographer of La Charité apparently, was the last person to be applied to, J—— had to content himself with a sketch after all.---While he was at work the same woman, whose only duty seemed to be to do us the honours of the place, showed me the old church.

When I went back J—— was still struggling with the sketch, and with small boys who could not keep their hands off the machine. Women stood around him in a semicircle, passing a baby, which they called *cher petit chiffon*, from one to the other, and only leaving space for an inner ring of workmen. Before I heard the words of the latter I knew by their gestures they were discussing the famous velocipede with the tall wheels.---We asked them about the race won by the Englishman.---It was no great thing, one said. The weather had been against it, and there was not much
of



of the world there. Some people started to come from other countries in the cars. But the porters and conductors told them there were no races at La Charité, and so they went on or back, he was not sure which. The Englishman had gone away again, he did not know where. ---I suppose the mistake was natural. Few tourists who travel by rail stop at La Charité, though it is a pretty town, as Mr. Evelyn says.

Following the Loire, the sand-banks



in its centre widening, the green wilderness growing greener and wilder, the town on the far hilltop fading softly into blue shadow, we came, in the middle
of

of the afternoon, to Pougres-les-Eaux, a fashionable invalid resort.

—After this, there was but a short way to go by the river. And though the little safety-wheel now worked loose from no possible cause, unless, perhaps, because it had not been used once in all our ride ; and though the rubber fastening in the lamp needed attention every few minutes, we reached Nevers—entering by the gate where Gerars so cunningly played and sang—early enough to see the town and the cathedral.



THE

THE BOURBONNAIS.

THE next morning when we awoke it was pouring ; but, the shower moderating into a drizzle, we made an early start after breakfast.---*Monsieur*, the landlord, was distressed when he saw both lamp and little wheel tied on with pink string. He hoped the velocipede had not been injured in his stables. ---*Madame*, in white cap and blue ribbons, with her babies at her side, was so sorry for me when she heard we were to ride all the way to Moulins that day—fifty-three kilometres, *Mon Dieu !*

I felt sorry for myself before the morning was over. The road was sticky, the wind and the rain—for it rained

rained again once we were out of the town and had turned our backs upon the Loire—were in our faces, and the up-grades were long and steep.---In all the villages through which we passed people laughed and dogs barked at us.---The trees were yellow and autumnal, and



the road was strewn with leaves. A grey rainy mist hung over the fields. ---The country was dreary, and in my heart I could but rue the day when sentiment sent us on this wild journey. My legs and back ached; every now and then I gasped for breath, and all the blood in my body seemed to have
gone

gone to my head, since it was impossible to sit upright in the face of such a wind. Truly it was a pitiful plight!

But all this was changed at St. Pierre, where the sun came out, and the road turning, the wind was with us.

Gone were the troubles of the morning, forgotten with the first kilometre. And the country was as gay and smiling as at an earlier hour it had been sad and mournful.---We were travelling through "the Bourbonnais, the sweetest part of France," and for the first time since we had left Paris we could look to Mr. Sterne for guidance.---But it was not for us to see Nature pouring her abundance into every one's lap, and all her children rejoicing as they carried in her clusters, though for the Master, in his journey over the same road, Music beat time to Labour.---'Tis pretty to write about, and there is nothing I should like better

better than to here describe all flesh running and piping, fiddling and dancing, to the vintage. But the truth is, we saw but one or two small vineyards in the Bourbonnais, and the heyday of the vintage had not yet come.---With the best will in the world our affections would not kindle or fly out at the groups before us on the road, not one of which was pregnant of adventure. There was



just its possibility in a little Gipsy encampment in a hollow by the roadside,
but

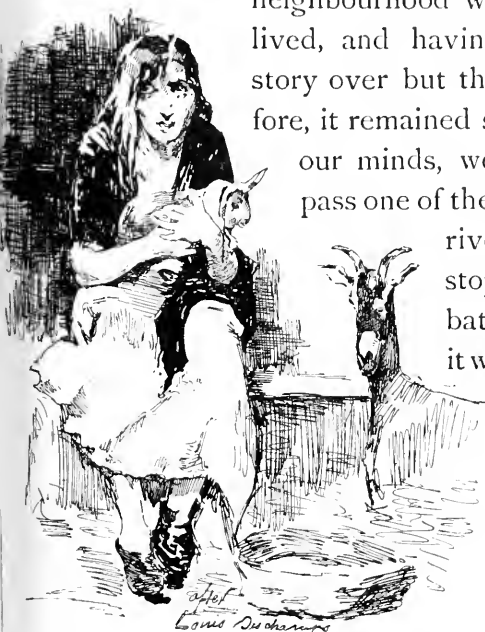
but after my misadventure near Boulogne I fought shy of Gipsies.

And now that we had got within the neighbourhood where Maria lived, and having read the story over but the night before, it remained so strong in our minds, we could not pass one of the many little

rivers without stopping to debate, whether it was here Mr.

Sterne discovered her,—her elbow on her lap, and her head

leaning on one side within her hand. And as there were many poplars by every



every turn of every stream, this was no easy matter to decide.—

“It must be here,” said we, when the river, after running under the road,

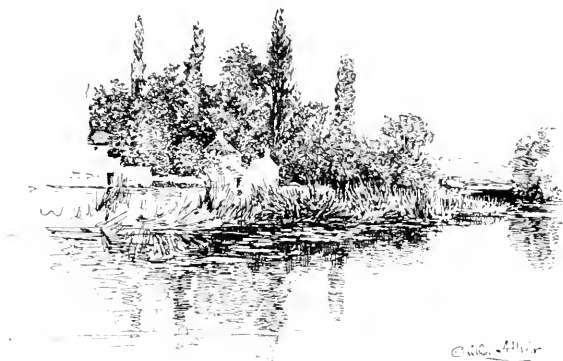


danced out in delight. But the next minute——

“No, it is here!” we cried, when, having lost its way in a thicket, the stream suddenly wandered back to the poplars and the open sunlight.

—In

—In this manner we lingered lovingly in the sweet Bourbonnais; and it so happened that when the cathedral



spires of Moulins came in sight we had settled upon a dozen resting-places for poor Maria, who has long since found her last; in fancy had a dozen times wiped her eyes with Mr. Sterne, and felt the most indescribable emotions within us, and had made a dozen declarations that we were positive we had a soul.---

Q

It

It was a serious tax upon sentiment. But when we entered Moulins——

“At least now,” we said, “there can be no doubt that just here they walked together, her arm within his, and Sylvio following by the lengthened string.”



MOULINS

MOULINS.

MOULINS is a stupid town with a very poor hotel and an American bar. It is true there is a cathedral, and a castle also. But, for one reason or another—perhaps because 'tis so monstrous high there was no avoiding taking notice of it—we only looked at the clock-tower.

However, we made a show of interest in the large *Place* in front of the hotel, deciding to our own satisfaction that it was the market-place where Mr. Sterne stopped to take his last look and last farewell of Maria.—

“Adieu, poor luckless maiden! Imbibe the oil and wine which the compassion

passion of a stranger, as he journeyeth on his way, now pours into thy wounds. The Being who has twice bruised thee can only bind them up for ever."

"And so we have done with Maria," said J——, shutting up the book in a business-like manner.

The only people we met in Moulins were at the *table d'hôte*.

One man told tales of gore terrible to hear in such peaceful surroundings. After his coming the dining-room smelt like a perfumery shop, so that we thought he must be in the perfumery line. But as he talked he launched us all upon a sea of blood. He in fancy fought now with men, now with beasts. He defied us to our faces. Give him a horse he couldn't subdue, indeed! And with knit brows and clenched fist he struggled again for our benefit with a famous steed,

steed, the officers in his regiment called *un vrai diable*.——

“ I will master it if I pay with my life. The blood flows from my ears, my eyes, my nose, my mouth ! I faint. A man who sees me fall cries, ‘ There lies a corpse ! ’ I am in bed for a week. But, *Dame*, now a child can ride that horse.”

—His next battle we had the awful pleasure to witness was with the landlady. It was in the morning. She sat in the court-yard ; he brushed his hair at an upper window. She had forgotten to call him. Here was a pretty state of things ; he would miss his train. Well, if he did, he would come back, and—— We lost the rest as he disappeared towards his dressing-table. We thought of the mastered horse, and shuddered. But the landlady bore it calmly.——

Et bien ! what was to be done with a
man

man who, when he was called, turned on his pillow and went to sleep again? she wanted to know.

—He tore out, his cravat in one hand, his coat in the other, scenting the air in his flight.---Ten minutes later, as we waited by the railroad for the train to pass, we saw him at a carriage window adjusting his cravat, and we knew the peace of Moulins would not be disturbed that day.

THE BOURBONNAIS AGAIN.

THERE was nothing from which we had painted out for ourselves so joyous a riot of the affections, as in this journey in the vintage through this part of France. But the absence of vineyards was an obstacle to the realisation of the picture. From Moulins to



La Palisse, and indeed to La Pacaudière,
we

we saw not one. Instead there was a rich green meadowland, or a desolate plain, with here and there a lonely pool.

Under the hedges women knit as they watched their pigs. Donkey-carts rattled by, huge hay-carts lumbered along at snail's pace, and from the fields came voices of peasants at work.---
 "Sacred name of 'Thomas!"



we heard one call to his oxen.---Now and then the Allier, with its poplars, showed itself in the distance. Far in front were low green hills, and beyond them rose the pale blue range of the Cevennes.

Three several times we loitered *terribly*. Once at St. Loup, where we ate an omelette. The second time at Varennes, where the river, with its border of white-capped washerwomen, made a pretty picture. The third, by a field where

where oxen were ploughing, and on the farther side of which we could see a tiny



village with a church steeple spiring above its cottages. A ploughman, in short blue jacket and low wide-brimmed black hat, left his plough to come and look at us.—

“*Dieu!* but it’s a fine machine!” he said, after he had walked all around it. And where was it made? for in France he knew there were only velocipedes with two wheels. He at least had not seen the French tricycler. And
it

it must have cost a good deal—two hundred francs, for example?

“More than that,” J—— told him.

“Name of a dog! ’twas a big price!” But if he’d only the money he’d buy one just like it. Then he called a friend from a near field.---If it was not asking too much, the latter said, would we tell him where we came from? Ah, from America? And was it better there for the poor? Did the rich give them work? When they saw the sketch-book they pointed to the church and said it would be pretty to draw. And were we traveling for pleasure? they asked as J—— offered them cigarettes, and they in return gave him a light.

’Twas in the road between Varennes and La Palisse, but nearer La Palisse, where there was a steep hill to be coasted, that we began to meet a great crowd

crowd of people ;—men in blue and purple blouses, wide-brimmed hats, and sabots ; and women in sabots and frilled white caps, with fresh ribbons at their necks. A few trudged on by themselves, but the greater number led cows, or sheep, or calves. Sometimes one man followed half a dozen cows, sometimes one cow was followed by half a dozen men.---Indonkey-carts women rode alone, the men, whip in hand, walking by their side ; and in waggons drawn by oxen were young pigs, or else an old woman and a refractory calf sitting together on the straw.---On footpaths across the fields, or on distant roads, more peasants, were walking away, cattle at their heels. ---The nearer we came to the town, the greater was the crowd. The worst of it was, the people were surly ; not one would get out of our way until the last minute, and many pretended not to see

see us coming, though the machine, held in by the brake, squeaked a pitiful warning.

Finally, in the street of La Palisse, we could hardly get on for the cows and oxen, and donkeys and people.

"'Twas no great thing," said an old man in blouse and sabots of whom we asked what was going on.

"'Twas no great thing!" repeated a stout manufacturer in frock-coat and Derby hat, adding that it was merely the yearly fair. A tricycle that stood in his front-yard served as introduction. "Tricycling is no way to get fat," he remarked, looking critically at J——, and as he was very stout, we fancied this was his reason for riding. And what time did we make? It takes a peasant to understand riding for pleasure. He had a friend who rode two hundred kilometres in a day, going backwards and

and forwards between La Palisse and Moulins.

—Now, as we never made any time



worth bragging about, and as we had a climb of nineteen kilometres to St. Martin

Martin still before us, we waited to hear no more of the feats of French champions.

We left La Palisse, and rode up a narrow pass, hills, now bare and rocky, now soft and purple with heather, on every side, in company with peasants going home from the fair.—

“Is there a third seat?” asked one.

“It walks!” cried another.

—The ascent was so gradual and the gradient so easy that only once was I forced to get down and walk.---But what’s wrong now? The lamp of course. Three times did it fall on the road just as we were going at good pace. Once J—— picked it up quietly; next he kicked it and beat it in place with a stone; the third time, “Let it lie there!” said he. A peasant stopped to get it, examined it and—put it in his pocket.---The road wound slowly up to St. Martin

tin.---La Pacaudière, the next village, was seven kilometres farther on, and there was but one short hill to climb on the way, a boy told us. And so to La Pacaudière we went.

In a few minutes we were at the top, and far below, a broad valley, well wooded, and now bathed in soft



evening light, stretched to hills we knew were the Cevennes we must cross on the morrow, no longer blue and indistinct, as in the morning, but green and near.---We let the machine carry us, flying by pretty sloping orchards and meadows

meadows when the descent was steep, creeping between them when it was but slight.---The sun was low in the west, and the evening air deliciously cool. We had left the peasants many kilometres behind, and we had no company save once when a girl in a scarlet cloak walked along a footpath on the hillside, singing as she went.



WITH



WITH THE WIND.

“**N**AME of God! it is six hours!”
and a loud hammering at the window below wakened us with a start, and then we heard shutters banging and the wind blowing a blast over the hills. For the first time in our journey we were out of bed before seven, and the next minute J——’s head was out of the window. The trees on the hilltops were all bent towards the Cevennes, and as he pulled in his head the shutters came crashing after him.——

“ If the road’s right,” cried he, “ we’ll have the wind behind us all the way,” and we dressed with a will.

We were off, flying with the hurricane down the hillside towards the valley.--- A storm had burst over the hills, only to be driven onwards by the wind. As we rode we saw it relinquish one post after another. On the nearest hilltop a little white village shone in clear sunlight, a bright rainbow above it; over the second the clouds were breaking, while the third was still shrouded in showers.---Before us was greyness, the Cevennes lost in blue mist; behind, a country glowing and golden. The early morning air was cold, but sweet and pure, and almost all the way our feet were on the rests, and we had but to enjoy ourselves. For another such ride I would willingly spend ten days fighting the wind.

By

By nine we were in Roanne, a town remarkable for nothing but dust and delicious peaches and grapes.

The road crossed the Loire, and went straight through the valley to the Cevennes.---The peasants we met were blown about by the wind, turning their backs to each strong gust, that almost blinded them, but drove us on the faster.---At the very foot of Mt. Tarrare, closed in with high hills, was an old posting village, with four or five large hotels falling to ruin. It was hereabouts a shoe came loose from the fore-foot of Mr. Sterne's thill-horse. But we met with no accident, nor, for the sake of sentiment, could we invent one.---The road began to go over the mountain; and we wound with it, between high cliffs on one side and an ever-deepening precipice on the other. We left the river and the railroad further
and

and further below, until the latter disappeared into a tunnel and the former was just indicated by its trees.

At St. Symphorien we stopped for lunch. At the *café-restaurant* we were refused admittance. This turned out to be in a measure fortunate, for at the hotel we were taken in; and there, as it was an old posting-house, the court-yard, with its stables and old well, and the enormous kitchen hung with shining coppers were worth looking at. Bicycles were always passing that way, the landlady assured us. Therefore, it seemed, it was our looks and not the tricycle that shut the door of the *café* in our faces, and I began to wonder how we should fare in Lyons.---The landlady, with an eye to profit, thought we ate too little, but her daughter understood: it was not good to eat too much in the middle of the day when you were taking exercise.



exercise. A gentleman on a walking tour once came to their hotel for his midday meal, but would have only bread and cheese. And yet she knew he was a gentleman by the diamond on his finger and the *louis* in his purse.---We thought of Mr. Stevenson—it would have been pleasant to have him, as well as Mr. Sterne and Mr. Evelyn, for fellow-traveller over Mt. Tarare—but at once we remembered he wore a silver ring like a pedler; and, besides, if you will look on our map you will see that, though we were in the Cevennes, we were not in the Cevennes made famous by Modestine and Camisards.---The landlady, who liked the sound of her own voice, went on to say that we had twelve kilometres to climb before we should come to the top of the pass, and that a good horse leaving St. Symphorien early in the morning might get
into

into Lyons by evening. There was small chance, she thought, of our reaching that city until the next day.

But we hurried away to make the best of the wind while it lasted.---With every mile the view back upon the mountains widened. When we looked behind, it was to see a vast mass of hills, some green or red, with a touch of autumn, others deep purple or grey ; over them the clouds, hunted by the wind, cast long trailing shadows, and in and out and up and up wound the white highway.---One or two tumbled-down posting hotels and forlorn farm-houses, sheltered under friendly hills, were scattered by the way. Probably in one of these Mr. Sterne sat at his feast of love ; in front of it watched the dance in which he beheld Religion mixing. But they were desolate and deserted. I fear, had sentiment sent us walking

walking into them, we should have found no honest welcomes, no sweet morsels, no delicious draughts.---At this height children and stone-breakers were the only beings to be seen on Mt. Tarare.

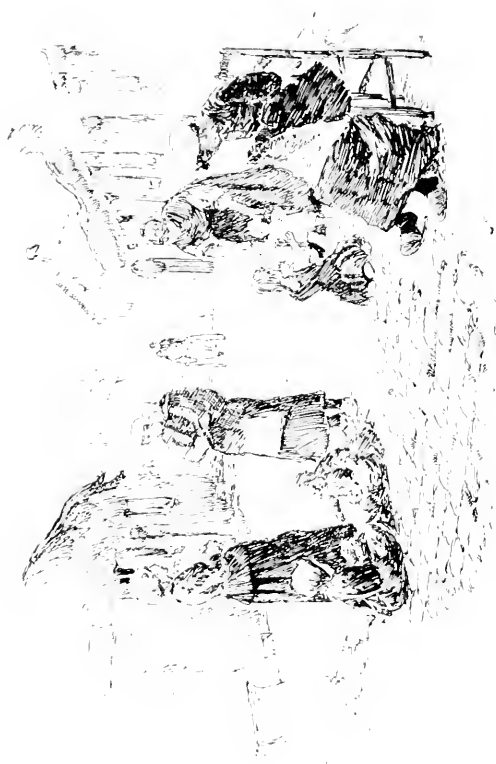
Not far from a lonely, wind-bent black cross, that stood on a high point in the moorland, we reached the summit, and looked down and not up to the winding road.---When you have gained the top of Mt. Tarare you do not come presently into Lyons ; with all due reverence for our Master's words, you have still a long ride before you.---However, the wind now fairly swept the tricycle in front of it, as if in haste to bring us into Tarare.---The road kept turning and turning in a narrow pass. A river made its way, no longer to the Loire, but to the Rhône. But we rode so fast, we only knew we were flying
through

through this beautiful green world. The clear air and cold wind gave us new life. We must keep going on and on. Rest seemed an evil to be shunned. For that afternoon at least we agreed with Mr. Tristram Shandy, that so much of motion was so much of life and so much of joy;—and that to stand still or go on but slowly is death and the devil. We said little, and I, for my part, thought less.

But at last J—— could no longer contain himself.——

“Hang blue china and the eighteenth century, Theocritus and Giotto and Villon, and all the whole lot! A ride like this beats them all hollow!” he broke out, and I plainly saw that his thoughts had been more definite than mine.

Tarare was an ugly town, and in its long narrow street stupid people did
their



their best to be run over. As we coasted down into it, we had one of those bad minutes that will come occasionally to the most careful cyclist. J.— had the brake on, and was back-peddalling, but after a many miles' coast a tricycle heavily loaded like ours will have it a little its own way.---Some women were watching a child in front of a house on the farther side of the street. They turned to stare at us. The child, a little thing, four years old perhaps, ran out directly in front of the machine. We were going slowly enough, but there was no stopping abruptly at such short notice. J—— steered suddenly and swiftly to the left; the large wheel grazed the child's dress in passing. It was just saved, and that was all.---The women, who alone were to blame, ran as if they would fall upon us.——

“ Name

"Name of names! Dog! Pig! Name of God!" cried they in chorus.

"*Accidente! Maledetta! Bruta!*" answered J——. And this showed how great the strain had been. In a foreign land, in moments of intense excitement, he always bursts out in the wrong language. But the child was not hurt, and that was the great matter. We did not wait to hear their curses to the end.

We had another bad quarter of a minute later in the afternoon, when we were climbing a hill outside L'Abresle. Two boys had carried a bone-shaker up among the poplars. As they saw us one jumped on, and with legs outstretched, sailed down upon us. He had absolutely no control over his machine, which, left to its own devices, made straight for ours. And all the time he and his companion yelled like young demons.---

There

There was no time to get out of his way, and I do not care to think what might have been if, when within a few feet of the tandem, the machine had not darted off sideways and suddenly collapsed, after the wonderful manner of bone-shakers, and brought him to the ground.

(I leave this void space that the reader may swear into it any oath he is most unaccustomed to. If ever J—— swore a *whole* oath into a vacancy in his life I think it was into that.)---He was for getting down and thrashing the boy for his folly. But I was all for peace, and fortunately winning the day, we climbed on, while the cause of the trouble still sat in the road mixed up with his bone-shaker, muttering between his teeth something
about

about, "Oh, if it were only not for *Madame!*"

All afternoon we rode up and down, through valleys, by running streams, over an intricate hill country, with here and there a glimpse of distant mountains, to fill us with hope of the Alps, meeting, to our surprise, the railroad at the highest point; and in and out of little villages, which, with their white houses and red-tiled roofs, were more Italian than French in appearance.

I do not think we rested once during that long afternoon. But after a hundred kilometres I must confess we began to lose our first freshness. There were so many long up-grades, the roads were not so good, the peasants were disagreeable, trying to run us down, or else stupid, refusing to answer our questions; and the sign-posts and kilometre-stones were all wrong. We were so
near,



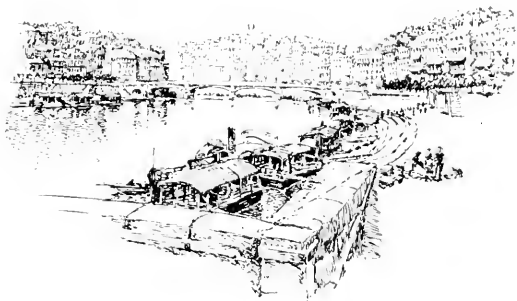


near, it seemed foolish not to push on to Lyons. For once we would make a record, and beat the good horse from St. Symphorien. But it was hard work the last part of the ride.---And when we came to the suburbs of the city the people laughed and stared, and screamed after us, as if they had been Londoners. We had their laughter, *pavé*, carts, and street cars the rest of the way; and when we crossed the river, "I had better get down," said I; and so I walked into Lyons, J—— on the tricycle moving slowly before me over the *pavé* and between the carts.---No one could or would direct us to the hotel; policemen were helpless when we appealed to them; but just as J—— was opening his mouth to give them to the devil—'tis Mr. Sterne's expression, not mine or J——'s—a small boy stepped nimbly across the street and pointed
around

around the corner to the Hôtel des Négociants.

That evening in the *café* we read in the paper that the wind had been blowing sixty-six kilometres an hour !





LYONS.

TO those who call vexations *vexations*, as knowing what they are, there could not be a greater than to be the best part of a day at Lyons, the most opulent and flourishing city in France. It has an old cathedral, a castle on a hillside, ruins if I be not mistaken, two rivers, and I know not what besides. Baedeker devotes pages to it. Moreover, there is associated with it a story, that, to quote Mr. Tristram Shandy, who tells it, affords more *pabulum* to the brain

brain than all the *Frusts* and *Crusts* and *Rusts* of antiquity, which travellers can cook up for it. You remember the tale? It is that of fond lovers, cruelly separated.—

Amandus—He,
Amanda—She,

each ignorant of the other's course ;

He—east,
She—west ;

and finally, to cut it short, after long years of wandering for the one, imprisonment for the other, both coming unexpectedly at the same moment of the night, though by different ways, to the gate of Lyons, their native city, and each in well-known accents calling out aloud — — —

Is Amandus }
Is my Amanda } still alive ?

then,

then, flying into each other's arms, and both falling down dead for joy, to be buried in the tomb upon which Mr. Shandy had a tear ready to drop. But, alas! when he came—there was no tomb to drop it upon!

We expected letters, and began the day by a visit to the Post Office, where the clerk, after the manner of his kind in all countries, received and dismissed us with contemptuous incivility.---To be rid of all business, we next went to the *Crédit Lyonnais* to have some Bank of England notes changed for French gold. But the cashier looked at them and us with distrust, and would have nothing to do with our money.——

Where was our reference? he asked.

This was more than enough to put us in ill-humour. But J——, having looked up in his *C. T. C. Handbook* the address of the agent for cycle repairs

pairs in Lyons, and his place being found with difficulty, we walked in under a pretext of asking about the road to Vienne, but really, I think, in search of sympathy.

We introduced ourselves as fellow-cyclers who had ridden all the way from Calais. But the agent was calmly indifferent, and scarcely civil.---Where should we find the national road to Vienne?---We had but to follow the Rhône, on the opposite bank, and he bowed us towards the door. But just as we were going, he stopped us to ask what time we could make. J—— told him that yesterday we had come from La Pacaudière, a ride of one hundred and twenty odd kilometres, which was perfectly true. But that, it appeared, was nothing. The agent could not bear to be outgone, and so, of course, had a friend who could ride four hundred kilometres in twenty-eight hours.---Then
J——,

J——, to my surprise, proceeded to tell him of the wonderful records we had never made. But the agent always had a friend who could beat us by at least a minute or a kilometre. In their excitement each was bent on breaking the other's record, not of cycling, but of lying.

At the end J—— had worked himself up to quite a frenzy. When we were alone, and I took him to task, he was not at all repentant, but swore he was tired of such nonsense, and would outlie the fellows every time.

It was now noon, and we had already seen more than we wanted of Lyons. We went back to the hotel, strapped the bag on the tricycle, and without giving another thought to the cathedral and the curiosities we had not visited, we sallied forth to follow the Rhône, determined never to set foot in this flourishing city again.

THE

THE AUTUMN MANŒUVRES.

AFTER Lyons, adieu to all rapid movement! 'Tis a journey of caution; and it fares better with sentiments not to be in a hurry with them.

Before we were out of the city limits we lost our way, and went wandering through lanes hunting for a road by the river. One led us to a blank wall, another to a stone pile; and when we consulted passers-by they sent us back towards the town, and into a broad street running through endless ugly suburbs, and far out of sight of the Rhône.---So much for a fellow-cycler's directions.

In the open country the national road
was

was bad and full of stones. It is only fair to add that the agent in Lyons had said we should find little good riding between Lyons and Vienne. The wind, tired with its efforts of yesterday, had died away, and it was warm and close on level and hill.---And we were as changed as the country and weather! Gone with the wind and good roads and fair landscape was the joy of motion! Our force was spent, our spirit exhausted with the shortest climb.---In the first village we stopped for *groseille* and to rest. We sat at a little table in front of the *café*, silent and melancholy; and when the landlady came out and asked if my seat was on the luggage carrier, and if, perhaps, we could reach Vienne by evening (the distance from Lyons being twenty-seven kilometres), we were too weary to be amused. In parting she told us we had still four hills to cross; she

ought

ought rather to have said a dozen.---
The whole afternoon we toiled up long
ascents.

In near hills and valleys the French
army was out manœuvring. We could



hear the cannon and guns, and see
clouds of smoke before we came in sight
of the battle.---We had glimpses, too, of
reserves



reserves entrenched behind hillocks and wooded spaces, and once we almost routed a detachment of cavalry stationed by the roadside. Scouts and officers on horseback tore by ; soldiers hurried through the streets of a narrow hilly village.---What with the noise and the troops, the road was lively enough. And presently from a high hilltop we overlooked the field of action. A fort was being stormed ; as we stopped a new detachment of the enemy charged it. They marched in good order over a ploughed field, and then across green pastures. Both sides kept up a heavy firing.——

“ The French army amuses itself down there,” said a grinning peasant, who watched with us.

—Indeed all the peasants seemed but little edified by the fighting. Many ignored it. Others laughed, as if it had
been

been a farce played for their amusement.——

“It is good there are no balls,” remarked an old cynic when we drew up to have a second look; “if there were, then would it be *Sauve qui peut!*”

At last guns and smoke were out of sight and hearing. But the road still ran between dry fields and over many hills, and the peasants were disagreeable. It seemed in keeping with the day's experiences that the long hill leading down into Vienne, should be so steep that I had to get off the machine and walk. We were both in a fine temper, J——, moreover, complaining of feeling ill by the time we were fairly in the city.---Here, a priest and his friend, for fear we might not understand their directions, politely came with us from the river, through twisting streets,

streets, to the hotel. I do not believe we thanked them with half enough warmth. 'Twas the first, and I wish it had been the last, civility shown us that day.

V I E N N E.

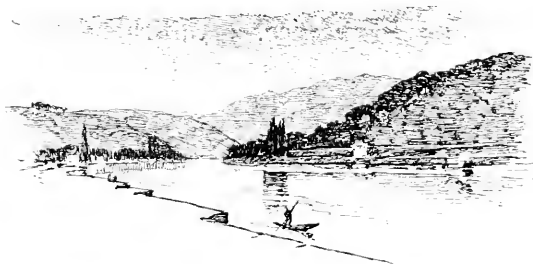
SO now we were at the ancient city of Vienne as early as three o'clock, and J—— too exhausted to ride farther that afternoon. We never yet went on a long trip, as everybody must or ought to know by this time, that J—— did not break down at least once on the way. The matter threatened to be serious; but after half an hour or more of despair—for we thought now surely we are done with sentiment—we went out in search of food, the first and most natural medicine that suggested itself, as in our haste to be out of Lyons we had taken but a meagre lunch.---It is a peculiarity of Vienne, a town of *cafés*, that all its
restaurants

restaurants are on the same street. When we were about giving up the search we by chance turned in the right direction, and found more than a dozen in a row. We chose one that looked quiet, and there J—— ate a bowl of soup and drank a glass of *gomme*, and at once was himself again.---I have mentioned this affair, slight as it was, because I think the merits of *gomme* but little known, and therefore hope the knowledge may be of use to other sentimental travellers in similar straits. Besides, it is the rule with cyclers to recommend the most disagreeable drinks that can be imagined, and I believe there is nothing viler than *gomme*. The truth is, we ordered it by mistake for another syrup the name of which we did not know. And now let there be an end of it.

It was fortunate J—— recovered : there are few pleasanter cities for an
afternoon

afternoon ramble than Vienne. The hills look down from round about the town, here and there a grey castle or white farm-house on their vine-clad slopes, and from the new broad boulevard or old narrow streets you have near and distant views of the rapid Rhône. Now you come out on the brown crumbling cathedral, raised aloft and towering above the houses, grass growing on the high flight of stone steps leading to its richly sculptured portals, bricks in places keeping together its ruinous walls, time's traces on its statues and gargoyles. Now, you wander into a clean, quiet *Place*, from the centre of which a Roman temple, in almost perfect preservation, frowns a disdainful reproach upon the frivolous *cafés* and confectioners, the plebeian stores and lodgings, that surround it. And again, you follow a dark winding alley under a fine
Roman

Roman gateway, and find yourself in an old amphitheatre, houses built into its walls and arches, and windows full of flowers and clothes drying in the sun.



On the whole, I believe the pleasantest place in all Vienne to be the *quai*. ---The sun had set behind the opposite hills when we returned to it after our walk. A bell jingled close to our ears, and behold, a tricycler, in spotless linen on a shining nickel-plated machine, came that way. But J—— stopped him, and consulted him about the road to Rives; and he, as polite as his

his machine was elegant, gave us minute directions.---Beware of the road to the left, it is bad and mountainous; keep to the right in leaving the town, then you will have it good and level;—this was the gist of his advice. And then he too must know what time we made, and “Ah, no great thing!” was his verdict upon the bravest feats J—— could invent, and then he rode on into the twilight.

THE FEAST OF APPLES.

I DO not know why it was, but no sooner had we gone from Vienne by the road to the right, than we distrusted the directions of the tricycler we had met the night before. We asked our way of every peasant we saw. Many stared for answer. Therefore, when others, in a vile patois, declared the road we were on would take us to Chatonnay and Rives, but that it would be shorter to turn back and start from the other end of Vienne, we foolishly set this advice down to the score of stupidity, and rode on.---But, indeed, in no part of France through which we had ridden were the people so ill-natured
and

and stolid. They are certainly the Alpine-bearish Burgundians Ruskin calls them.---In the valley on the other side of the hills we came to a place where



four roads met. A woman watched one cow close by.---Would she tell us which
road

road we must follow? asked J——politely. ---She never even raised her head. He shouted and shouted, but it was not until he began to call her names, after the French fashion, that she looked at us. ---We could take whichever we wanted, she answered, and with that she walked away with her cow.

Fortunately there was a little village two or three kilometres farther on. A few well-dressed women and children were going to church, for it was Sunday. But the men of the commune stood around a *café* door. They assured us, we were on the wrong road, and had come kilometres out of our way, but that all we could do was to go on to a place called Lafayette. There we should find a highway that would eventually lead us into the *Route Nationale*.---This was not encouraging. It was oppressively hot in the shadeless valley. The
road

road was bad, full of stones and ugly ruts and ridges, and before long degenerated into a mere unused cow-path, overgrown with grass, crossing the fields. We tried to ride ; we tried to walk, pushing the machine. Both were equally hard work.—

“ To a Frenchman any road's good so he don't have to climb a hill,” said J——, in a rage. “ If I only had that fellow here !”

—We were walking at the moment.—

“ Get on !” he cried, and I did.

—We bumped silently over the ruts.—

“ Get off !” he ordered presently, and meekly I obeyed, for indeed I was beginning to be alarmed.

—He took the machine by the handlebars and shook it hard.—

“ You'll break it !” cried I.

“ I

"I don't care if I do," growled he, and he gave it another shake.

—But at this crisis two women coming towards us, he inquired of them, with as good grace as he could command, the distance to Lafayette. They stood still and laughed aloud. He repeated his question; they laughed the louder. The third time he asked, they pointed to a solitary farm-house standing in the fields. He paused. I saw he was mentally pulling himself together, and I wished the women were out of harm's way.—

"*Nous — sommes — ici — dans — un — nation — de — bêtes — de — fous !*" he broke out, this time in French, a pause between each word. "*Oui — tous — bêtes — tous — fous — Vous — fous — aussi !*"

—The women turned and ran.

I think they were right about Lafayette after all. In a few minutes we
came

came to a good road. An *auberge* stood to one side, and a man at once approached us.——

We must come in, he said ; it was a *fête* day, and we should be served with whatever we wanted.

But J—— was not to be so easily rid of his troubles.——

“*Un — Français—dans—Vienne,*” he explained ; “*nous—a—envoyer—là—bas. —Il—est—fou !*”

“ Yes, yes ! ” said the man soothingly ; but, all the same, as it was a feast day, it seemed we must come to the *auberge*.

The feast consisted of boiled beef and rabbit ; the holiday-makers, of a few peasants eating at rough wooden tables in front of the inn, a father and his four small sons drinking wine together and solemnly clinking glasses, and one man shooting with a cross-bow at diminutive Aunt Sallies.---We made a fair lunch,
though

though when we refused wine the landlady asked, with disgust——

“ Then you do not mean to eat ? ”

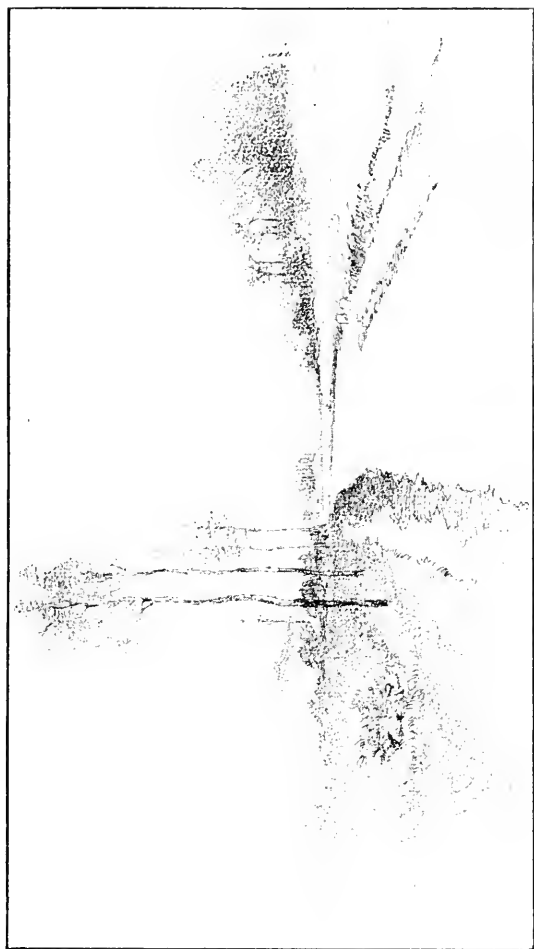
We sat with the peasants, who fell into conversation with us. When they heard how we had come from Vienne, they thought we must have had *commerce* in the villages in the valley to take such a route. And though J—— again explained about *that fool in Vienne*, they would have it we were pedlers.

When we set out, our first friend was at hand to ask if we had had all we wanted. The next day we saw by a printed notice that Sunday had been the *Feast of Apples*—a day whereon the people were begged to show every kindness to travellers through their land ; and then we understood his politeness.

Perhaps a kilometre or two from the
auberge

auberge we turned into the Grenoble road, and from that time onward there were but few sign-posts and the cross-roads were many.---It promised to be a day of misfortunes. The country was hilly ; we were always working up, with only occasional short coasts down, now through villages on the hillside, and now between steep wooded banks.---Once, when, sore perplexed to know which way to go, we were pedalling slowly in indecision, the road made a sudden curve, the banks fell on either side, and there at last they were, the long blue ranges, and, away beyond, one snow-crowned peak shining in sunlight. ---After that, they—the delectable mountains of our Sentimental Journey—were always hopefully before us.

—Just outside St. Jean Bournay we came upon the right road from Vienne, but twenty-two kilometres from that city,



city, we saw on the kilometre-stone, and we had already ridden forty-four!

—At the other end of the town we passed a theatre, a large canvas tent with two or three travelling vans close by. A crowd had gathered around it, and were staring with interest at a printed notice hung in front. It was an old American poster, picked up, who knows



where? with the name of the play in French above and below it.

A woman in the crowd explained that a negro was the slave of a planter.—

“Or a Prussian, perhaps?” a man suggested.

“No ; to be a negro, that is not to be a Prussian,” argued the woman.*

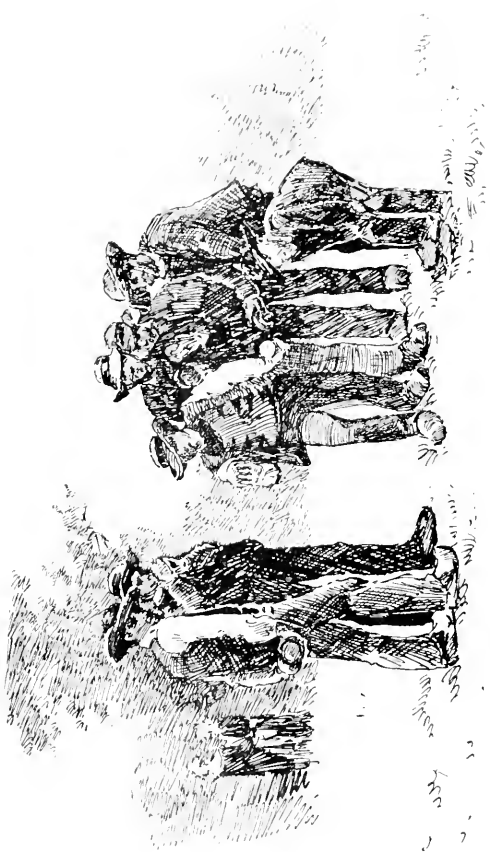
After La Côte St. André the road ran between low walnut-trees.---Now and then the monotony of their endless lines was broken by a small village, where men played bowls ; and now and then the road was lively with well-dressed people, who jumped as the machine wheeled past them.---

“But that it frightened me, for example !” cried one.

But later a peasant called out—“*O malheur, la femme en avant !*”

—By-and-by the way grew lonelier, and we had for company the cows, great white stupid creatures, going home from pasture, and their drivers stupid as they.

* We have never ceased regretting that we did not go to see *Crasmagne en Amérique*.



after
1864, T. Deyroue.

who roused themselves but to swear by the name of God, or to call out, "Thou beast of a pig!" to a cow frightened into the fields by the tricycle.---At last we turned into a broad road, where the walnuts gave place to poplars, and the level came to an end. At the foot of a long steep straight hill was Rives, deep down in a narrow valley.

RIVES.

R I V E S .

AT the Hôtel de la Poste a middle-aged *fille-de-chambre*, in a white cap—another Alpine - bearish Burgundian—looked upon us with such disfavour we could scarce persuade her to show us our room.

The dining-room was full of noisy men in blouses and big hats. No place was left for us at the long table, that stretched the entire length of the room; and we sat together in a corner.---The dinner was excellent. But the enemy in white cap was down upon us in a minute, and gave us no peace. She raised a window upon our backs, and as often as we shut it was at our side
to

to open it again. We had the worst of it, for with the salad we seized our wine and napkins and retreated to the opposite corner, giving up our table to four men, who took off their blouses and coats—but not their hats—for their greater comfort, as they sat down and themselves opened the window. What would have been pneumonia, or colds in the heads for us, was health for them.

But there was no rest for us at Rives. ---We went to bed early, but until late at night men in heavy boots tramped up and down the narrow carpetless hall outside our door, and in and out the room overhead. They began again at four o'clock in the morning.---As there was no more sleep to be had,——

“We might as well make an early start,” said J——, and we were downstairs by six.

—When we had had our coffee I
returned

returned to our room to pack the bag, and J—— went to the stable to get the tricycle. Presently he came up and joined me.---I had not expected him so soon, and was not quite ready.---

“Something has happened,” said I as soon as I looked at him, but still folding flannels.

“We cannot go on,” said he.

“Why?” cried I, jumping up and dropping the flannels.

“I’ll tell you,” said he; “because”-----



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